



Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Iraq

A delegation led by Tariq 'Aziz arrived in New York for a UN session devoted to "Iraq's compliance with the UN Security Council resolutions," INA reported. In a speech broadcast by the clandestine Voice of the People of Kurdistan, Jalal Talabani said that the Kurds "do not accept the dictatorial authority in Baghdad," and that "there is no scope left" for the government's "peaceful coexistence" with the Kurds. Two diplomats have been appointed to work in the Iraqi interests section in Egypt, according to MENA.

Israel

Shamir told Jerusalem radio that the government is not going to give up on getting the U.S. loan guarantees. Asked about remarks attributed to Secretary Baker, Shamir said that if Baker denies having said them, "I tend to accept his denial." Editorials considered Baker's reported remarks, with HA'ARETZ seeing no "personal anti-Semitism" in his comments; 'AL HAMISHMAR urged the government to halt the "verbal escalation" against Baker and the President.

Jordan

King Husayn, currently en route to Washington, is said to be bringing a plan according to which he would assume power in Iraq following the fall of Saddam Husayn, according to a British paper's report that was "scoffed at" by "Jordanian political circles in Amman," Radio Monte Carlo reported.

Egypt

Mubarak sent a condolence cable to the Israeli president on the death of Menahem Begin, according to MENA, which said Mubarak emphasized that Begin's willingness to accept the land-for-peace formula contributed to the conclusion of the bilateral peace treaty. The Pakistani prime minister asked Mubarak to mediate in that country's dispute with India over Kashmir, the agency continued. Security forces recently uncovered a "radical organization" funded by Iraq and Iran that is seeking to disrupt security in an effort to overthrow the government, the agency disclosed.

Kuwait

The envoy to the United Nations rejected Iraq's claims that Baghdad is holding no more Kuwaiti prisoners, KUNA reported. Meanwhile, an Iraqi "espionage ring" involving four Jordanians was uncovered, MENA reported, citing a Kuwaiti paper.

Inter-Arab Affairs

An Arab Economic Unity Council official "categorically denied" an AL-ITTIHAD report citing him as proposing conditional economic relations and cooperation with Israel, AL-DUSTUR reported.

India

The foreign secretary told U.S. officials that the country "will not sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty nor attend any five-nation conference," according to Delhi radio, which added that the country is nevertheless willing to continue bilateral talks aimed at advancing the nonproliferation process.

Inter-Arab Affairs

AEUC Denies Endorsing Arab Ties With Israel

JN0803150992 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
8 Mar 92 p 3

[Text] Amman—An official source of the general secretariat of the Arab Economic Unity Council [AEUC] has stated the following:

Citing Abu Dhabi's AL-ITTIHAD issue of Sunday, 1 March 1992, some media recently circulated a report saying the Arab countries could establish economic relations with Israel, and could cooperate with neighboring countries on the basis of equality.

The report cited what it called an Arab economic official and first Arab official to present this possibility, Mr. Hasan Ibrahim, head of the Arab Economic and Social Council affiliated with the Arab League.

Hasan Ibrahim immediately categorically denied, in part and parcel, such reports. He asserted that he had not made any statements to AL-ITTIHAD, and was surprised at such a false and misleading claim.

It is noticed that the report contains strange expressions attributed to Mr. Ibrahim, such as "could establish relations," "neighboring countries," and "equality." These expressions were once attributed to an Arab economic official, another time to the first Arab official, and yet another time to the head of the Arab Economic and Social Council which is not headed by Hasan Ibrahim. The report also involves the Arab League and its agencies in this issue, to which Mr. Ibrahim is not affiliated and which does not fall within his responsibilities.

The general secretariat stresses that Hasan Ibrahim is the AEUC secretary general. It asserts that the AEUC is a comprehensive Arab institution that is completely independent of the Arab League; that works within the framework of joint Arab economic action; that is committed to the agreements and treaties that organize Arab action; and that aims to establish Arab economic unity on the basis of attaining Arab economic integration by stages.

Therefore, the general secretariat reiterates, through its Secretary General Hasan Ibrahim, its denial of this claim which aims and is carefully laid out to serve a suspicious policy as well as Israel. The general secretariat also stresses its commitment and that of its secretary general to the pan-Arab responsibility in honoring its message which aims to protect Arab interests and guarantee the Arab nation's ambitions and aspirations.

Palestinian Affairs

Talks Delegation Returns; 'Ashrawi Comments

JN0903212192 Amman Jordan Television Network
in English 2000 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] The Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace talks in Washington returned to Amman tonight. Spokeswoman Hanan 'Ashrawi said the Palestinians presented serious issues to the Israelis such as settlements and human rights. She evaluated the last round as difficult and substantive.

[Begin recording] ['Ashrawi] The evaluation is still ongoing but I would say this was a very difficult and very substantive session and round in which serious issues and proposals were presented and in which we entered real initiative or discussions on settlement activities and on human rights violations and the necessity of implementing the Fourth Geneva Convention de jure. And also we presented a comprehensive proposal on the transitional phase which has at its core the elections as a means of creating a Palestinian source of authority in a democratic way.

[Unidentified correspondent] You presented the peace cause. Is that right? Can you tell us what was the reaction of the Israelis and the Americans too?

['Ashrawi] Well, the Israeli reaction was very predictable in that they rejected it out of hand because they saw in it, they said, all elements of statehood without a flag. But we said our proposal is based on international legitimacy, on Security Council resolutions, and is based primarily on the terms of reference for the negotiations for the whole process. So we were consistent with that. The Israelis are trying very hard to preempt a final outcome, to consolidate the hold of Israel on the occupied territories, to maintain an Israeli source of authority, and to control the people without the land. So these two are incompatible as proposals. The American side felt that these were difficult to compromise. They felt that we were presenting maximalist positions, and they urged very frankly entering into concrete substantive issues so they can present bridging proposals. We feel that without really articulating the basis and the principles on which the transitional phase would be based, it would be very difficult to enter into piecemeal negotiations. [end recording]

'Arafat 'Indignant' at Lack of Progress in Talks

LD0703052992 Madrid RNE-1 Radio Network
in Spanish 2300 GMT 6 Mar 92

[Text] The fourth round of Middle East peace talks between the Arabs and Israelis ended this week in Washington without any progress and without any hopes for the future. In view of this deadlock the possibility of the dialogue being broken off is beginning to take shape. This is the impression gained by a delegation from the Spanish parliament visiting Tunisia which met with

Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Correspondent Frank Sevilla spoke with the head of the Spanish parliamentary delegation:

[Sevilla] Luis Fajardo, chairman of the foreign affairs committee and head of the parliamentary delegation visiting Tunisia, says that Yasir 'Arafat is indignant at the lack of progress in the peace talks because of what he considers the nonexistent will to negotiate on the part of the Israeli Government—a stand that has brought the situation to its critical point.

[Begin Fajardo recording] The message that Mr. 'Arafat conveyed to us is one of a critical situation. His words were ones of indignation at the way that these talks are going, or rather not progressing, on the part of the Israeli side. [end recording]

[Sevilla] The Spanish parliamentary delegation met with Yasir 'Arafat on 5 March. The PLO leader explained to the Spanish deputies that his organization cannot continue to let time pass while its people are living in dramatic conditions. On this point Luis Fajardo believes that Spain and the EC must do everything possible to prevent the dialogue from being broken off, which is something that cannot be ruled out.

[Begin Fajardo recording] The general impression we have drawn is that the situation is a delicate one with regard to the continuation of the conference. From that point of view our conclusion is that the call that the Palestinians are directing to all international organizations, to countries, and in our case to the EC, must be heeded in the sense of asking for the parties, and in particular Israel, to agree to adopt a reasonable position. [end recording]

'Arafat Adviser Says Negotiations To Continue

JN0903190092 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic
1800 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] Brother Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian president brother Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, has affirmed that the Palestinians will continue to negotiate.

He said, however, that making progress in the bilateral peace negotiations requires a halt to settlement activity as well as seriousness on the part of the U.S. Administration in this regard. In statements published in Tunis today brother Nabil Sha'th said: I believe that we have been successful in convincing the Americans of the importance that we attach to the settlements issue. He added: I also believe that the Israelis have understood this position and that there is a conviction that halting settlement activity is the main condition for the success of the peace process.

Groups Urge Palestinian Delegation To Withdraw

NC0703183692 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
1700 GMT 7 Mar 92

[Text] The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Popular Struggle Front, and the Popular Liberation Front have called on the members of the Palestinian delegation to withdraw from the bilateral talks because these talks have reached a dead end. The groups issued a joint statement saying that the continuation of the talks encourages Israel to pursue its aggressive and colonialist policies in the occupied Arab territories.

The statement criticized the Palestinian delegation for submitting a working paper in Washington about autonomy before Israel has stopped building settlements. The working paper, the statement said, is a free concession to Israel.

Criticism of Palestinian Delegation 'Unjustified'

LD0903225992 Algiers Voice of Palestine
in Arabic 1602 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Station commentary]

[Excerpts] Brothers: It seems that the process of settling accounts has begun to materialize in the U.S. arena in the presidential election campaign currently taking place there. The Jewish community's lobby has started to launch an organized campaign against the current U.S. Administration because of its positions vis-a-vis the peace process, which are regarded by many supporters of Israel as not being in harmony with the ties of friendship, cooperation, and a strategic alliance which link the United States with Israel. On the contrary, they consider some of the U.S. Administration's position toward the Israeli policy as hostile and abrupt. With more than one occasion, statement, and example they have accused the administration of courting the Arab position in the current negotiations.

In this context it is worth singling out the position adopted by the U.S. Administration on loan guarantees requested by the Israeli Government from the United States. This position linked the granting of guarantees to the freezing and suspension of settlements in occupied Arab territories. [passage omitted]

The current campaign is focused on Secretary of State Baker, who is the architect of U.S. foreign policy and President Bush's closest friend and aide. He has so far made the biggest contribution as a patron of the negotiation process and in bringing about the U.S. position toward the loan guarantees. [passage omitted]

It seems that the campaign of pressure on Secretary Baker has started to bear fruit for the supporters of Israel, for a few days ago a senior U.S. State Department official criticized the Palestinian delegation [to the peace talks] and accused the Palestinians of placing more significance on the media than on negotiations. The

official also accused the Palestinian delegation of not having been serious during the fourth round of talks and said that the Palestinians were concentrating more on scoring media propaganda points than on holding serious negotiations with Israel.

Naturally, this official did not direct any criticism at Israel with regard to its positions vis-a-vis the negotiations or its settlement activities, which it is continuing in the occupied territories.

As a result of these accusations and criticisms directed at the Palestinian side, in our opinion it would be appropriate to emphasize that the Palestinian delegation has so far proved its sincerity and its persistence in participating effectively in the negotiation process despite all the barriers and obstacles placed in its way. We also have to emphasize that the Palestinian side has demonstrated its persistent readiness to enter into real negotiations on the essential issues up for negotiation. Moreover, it was not the side that has so far been drowning the process with formalities and procedural matters.

The U.S. accusation against the Palestinian delegation could be justified as being part of the U.S. presidential election campaign. It is, however, absolutely unjustified coming from one of the patrons of the negotiation process. The patron of this process is supposed to be an impartial mediator and should not fall into the labyrinth of reacting to pressure from one side by hurling accusations at the other. We have to emphasize to the U.S. Administration that the use of the hammer of internal pressure should not change it automatically and spontaneously into an anvil for it to hammer on without any justification.

Delegation Visits CIS Central Asian Republics

*LD0903142792 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio
Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 9 Mar 92*

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] An important Palestinian delegation is currently visiting some of the Central Asian CIS member republics with a view to establishing [rabt] diplomatic relations between the state of Palestine and these republics, and to explain the Palestinian point of view vis-a-vis the peace talks. [passage omitted]

Algeria

Boudiaf Discusses Rule of Women, Security

LD0903130892 Algiers APS in English 1016 GMT
9 Mar 92

[Text] Algiers, Mar 9 (APS)—“Women will sit in the future consultative council”. This is what the chairman of the Higher State Committee, Mohamed Boudiaf, declared Sunday here during a meeting with women personalities from the world of culture, sports as well as representatives from the women associations, on the occasion of the International Women Day.

During this meeting, the first one to be organized between the higher authorities of the state and women personalities, the women expressed their concerns and worries concerning the condition and the status of the Algerian women in these difficult moments the country is going through. In this context, they raised the question of the family code and expressed their concern about some news reported by the press according to which the family code is not among the priorities of the state.

A number of representatives of women associations intervened on this matter. Mrs Messaoudi, a chairwoman of a women association said that there are some points in the family code that make of women not human beings and asked at least for some amendments. A famous lawyer, Mrs Zerdani recalled on her turn the actions and struggles waged by women during the last years for the amendment of the family code. But, she said, there are more important problems. The priority today is the restoration of the state authority. In this context, she insisted on the necessity to reopen dialogue with forces capable of dialogue. Mrs Laoudj, a poet and university teacher tackled on her turn the problems of culture and university. In this context, she put the stress on the cultural crisis lived through by Algeria and its repercussions on the university.

Boudiaf, who intervened a number of times in debates, paid homage to the Algerian women, mainly the rural ones. He said that the problem of the family code will be tackled in the frame of the country's institutions. “The rights are not granted, the militant women must struggle, organize themselves to get rid of prejudices and make women aware of the role they must play within society”.

“The honest and responsible men of this country cannot oppose the emancipation of women”, the chairman of the Higher State Committee said adding that “the Algerian women have ideas. They have a level of consciousness that can help the country move forward”.

On another development, Boudiaf said there will be a return to democracy when conditions of stability and security enabling the expression of the free choice of Algerians will be met.

Official Says FIS Must Accept ‘Democratic Game’

LD0903212792 Rabat MAP in English 1334 GMT
9 Mar 92

[Text] Dakar, Mar. 9 (MAP)—Algerian authorities are wishing to make the Islamic party “FIS” [Islamic Salvation Front] “accept the rules of the democratic game”, said here Friday Mohamed Yazid, special envoy to Senegal of head of the Algerian High State Committee Mohamed Boudiaf.

The Algerian official who ended Sunday a visit to Senegal said the Islamic movement, which is “a reality”, for him, should be adapted to the ongoing democracy process in the world. The Algerian envoy also explained the authorities' decision to stop the election process and its latest decision to dissolve the fundamentalist front by the FIS clear intention to impose an Islamic law and by the attempts of some movements to use the democratic process to give power to anti-democratic forces.

To a question on the assistance Iran might have granted to the FIS, Yazid said some hardliners have openly and materially backed the FIS and hoped that the principle of non-interference in other countries' affairs will be adopted by all countries.

Yazid, who was first permanent Algerian delegate to the UN and ambassador to Beirut and is currently head of the Algiers Institute of Global Strategy Studies, left Dakar where he conveyed a message from Boudiaf to President Abdou Diouf for a similar mission in Lagos.

Council of Government Views Reform Efforts

LD0803203692 Algiers ENTV Television Network
in Arabic 1900 GMT 8 Mar 92

[Text] The Council of Government resumed its meetings today under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali. The agenda included four points.

The first was a report presented by the minister delegate for finance concerning the measures recently adopted to cleanse institutions. A decision was made to set up a committee to follow up the implementation of decisions.

The second was a discussion of the protection of domestic products in the textile and hides sectors and the need to pass through the transitional stage leading to the market economy.

The third point was the state of education with the aim of presenting an urgent program including the reorganization of secondary education during the next academic year.

The fourth point concerned the problem of prices. The Council discussed the causes of the delay in the price increases scheduled for March, among them being the delay in implementing social subsidies.

Union Demands State End 'Social Catastrophe'

*LD0903200392 Algiers ENTV Television Network
in Arabic 1900 GMT 9 Mar 92*

[Text] Concerning the prevailing market situation in these early days of holy Ramadan, the General Union of Algerian Workers [UGTA] noted in a statement issued today that the commitments made by the government and the measures it [the government] has announced to combat speculation, to protect low-income people, and to guarantee normal market supplies have not led to any substantial results.

Therefore, the UGTA demands that the highest authorities take immediate and firm steps to end the social catastrophe which has thrown the majority of the population into poverty and deprivation. In this context the UGTA expressed its concern over measures to completely free prices and to destroy the public sector, and it stated that it will not remain silent concerning the falling purchasing power of the workers and the selling off of state institutions.

Troops Called Onto Setif University Campus

*LD1003152792 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in Arabic 1200 GMT 10 Mar 92*

[Text] The situation has started becoming noticeably calmer after the recent disturbances at some universities in the homeland.

The academic council at Constantine University yesterday decided to open four university campuses today, and the Ain Bey and Choubat el-Rasas campuses are to open on 13 March.

Yesterday's examinations and classes at Blida University proceeded normally. A group of students attempted to organize a march, but this did not affect academic activities.

There was great tension at Setif University yesterday, and as a result the academic council decided to ban marches on the university campus and to expel any student engaging in disruptive activities at the university.

Today the situation at Setif University has further deteriorated, as our correspondent Faisal Ghames reports:

[Ghames] Today the university council officially asked the security forces which have been stationed at the university entrance for a week to enter the university campus. The council's decision comes after disturbances at the university at the beginning of this week which prevented normal academic activities. In a statement yesterday the university council stated that when necessary, the task of maintaining security at the university will be entrusted to the competent authorities, who will be assisted by the local authorities.

The security forces' entry onto the university campus at 1100 has not yet caused any incidents worth mentioning.

Prior to that a number of students and lecturers took part in a march at the university to protest the fact that the lack of examinations and classes has wasted an academic year, and to condemn the violence for which the university has become known. Meanwhile, a group of students belonging to the so-called Committee for the Defense of the People's Choice settled for shouting antiregime slogans.

Rights Official Notes Detention Camp Conditions

*LD0903203992 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in French 1700 GMT 9 Mar 92*

[Text] The detainees at Ouargla are living in extremely poor conditions, and confirmation of this was given this morning at a news conference. The center is described as overpopulated, and the detainees are living in crowded conditions. We have a summary of this news conference from Samia Babaissa:

[Babaissa] No torture is taking place at the Ouargla detention center, which the Human Rights League visited last week. On the other hand, the League forcefully denounces the overcrowding in this detention center: 2,000 people are interned there in a space intended for only 600 people. In short, said Human Rights League President Maitre Fathallah, the conditions are deplorable: people are packed into cramped spaces, some are housed in permanent structures, and others are simply in tents. The amount of food is inadequate for this number of people. Conditions of hygiene, it goes without saying, are not encouraging, said the doctor who was part of the observer group. He added: There was barely a small clinic, medical supplies were scarce, but fortunately there were no serious illnesses to mention except for two cases who were immediately hospitalized. In his report the doctor also noted two cases of torture, but he specified that these people were tortured at the time of their arrest.

Furthermore, Maitre Fathallah specified that detainees enjoyed freedom of movement inside the center but that most of them still do not know why they have been arrested. Another point specified is that the detainees are not all sympathizers of the Islamic Salvation Front; out of the 2,200 people interned, about 400 are intellectuals and academics. Among them are also students, doctors, and lawyers. It should be noted that the Human Rights League is planning further visits to the internment camps at Illizi, Reggane, and i-n-Salah over the next few days. No date has yet been given.

Mehri Says Assets Issue Seeks To 'Punish' FLN

*LD0303090292 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in Arabic 0800 GMT 3 Mar 92*

[Text] The fate of the National Liberation Front [FLN] and a number of other current issues were the focus of a press interview yesterday by Mr. Abdelhamid Mehri with the daily newspaper AL-SHA'B. Mr. Mehri said he

fears that the debate about the question of FLN assets is a political one designed to punish the FLN or to reduce its political influence.

FLN Secretary General Mr. Mehri said that we agree with the national rally if it is a fruit of national dialogue.

Egypt

Mubarak Sends Condolences on Begin's Death

NC0903141597 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1350 GMT
9 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 9 Mar (MENA)—President Hosni Mubarak has sent a cable of condolences to Israeli President Yitzhak Herzog on the death of former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

President Hosni Mubarak also sent a cable of condolences to Menachem Begin's family. Egypt's Ambassador to Israel Muhammad Basyuni will take part in Begin's funeral service. Begin passed away at dawn today at the age of 79.

Presidential Press Secretary Muhammad 'Abd-al-Mun'im said that President Hosni Mubarak expressed his respect for the late Israeli prime minister. He said that he was the first one, along with Egypt, to recognize the principle of land for peace, which contributed toward the success of the negotiations and the conclusion of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

Mubarak Asked To Mediate in Kashmir Dispute

NC1003105892 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1020 GMT
10 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 10 Mar (MENA)—President Hosni Mubarak has received a message from Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif in which the prime minister requests Egypt's mediation in the Indian-Pakistani dispute over the province of Kashmir.

The message was conveyed to the president during a meeting today with Elahi Bux Sumroo, Pakistani minister of science and technology.

Following the meeting, the Pakistani minister stated that his country has asked President Mubarak to mediate in the Kashmir problem because he is "a realistic president who led his country to the top, and because Egypt is playing a central and significant role, not only in the Middle East, but in the entire international arena as well."

In his statement, Minister Sumroo said Egypt has excellent ties with both Pakistan and India. He said Pakistan depends on President Mubarak's wisdom and experience in mediation to remove the prevailing tension between the two countries.

The Pakistani minister said he had conveyed an invitation to President Mubarak from Pakistani President Ghulam Ishaq Khan to visit Islamabad.

Sumroo described Egyptian-Pakistani relations as "excellent, better than ever."

Foreign Minister Offers Assistance

NC1003154292 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt
Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 10 Mar 92

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met with the Pakistani president's personal envoy, who is visiting Cairo.

Afterward, 'Amr Musa discussed Egypt's stand on the Kashmir problem, saying: Egypt is ready to bring Pakistani and Indian views on the Kashmir problem closer together and to help overcome any obstacles because the two countries are Egypt's friends. Egypt also hopes that tension between the two does not increase, and it is prepared to do anything it can to aid a peaceful agreement on this problem.

The Pakistani minister said that he invited 'Amr Musa to visit Pakistan and attend meetings of the joint committee of the two countries. He stated that he explained his country's stand on Kashmir and that Pakistan is asking the United Nations to implement its decision to hold a referendum among the people of Kashmir.

Iraq, Iran Said Funding 'Radical' Movement

NC0903203792 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1920 GMT
9 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 9 Mar (MENA)—MENA has learned that the higher state security prosecution's interrogation of the owners of the Sahabil computer company, whom the security forces recently detained in Heliopolis, east of Cairo, has revealed the existence of a radical organization seeking to overthrow the Egyptian regime. A responsible source has stated that the investigations revealed that Iraq and Iran are funding this organization and that 100 million Egyptian pounds have been allocated to serve the organization's goals and implement its plan to disrupt security in preparation for overthrowing the regime.

The source said that the organization's 75 members, who operate in certain governorates, set up a consultative council. The members embrace a deviant ideology, spread their beliefs among citizens in various governorates, and claim that their goal is to establish an Islamic state. The higher state security prosecution investigations also revealed that a foreign exchange company which has been implicated in funding the organization receives money from abroad for its leadership.

The state security investigation organs last month detained the owners of the Sahabil computer company after obtaining information about its hostile activity against the regime. The company used the computer business as a cover for its activities. The higher state

security prosecution is continuing its interrogation of the organization's members to uncover further information on its dimensions and plans.

Government Arrests 90 Fundamentalists in al-Fayyum

NC0903185592 Paris AFP in English 1731 GMT
9 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, March 9 (AFP)—Ninety Muslim fundamentalists were arrested during search operations by Egyptian security forces in al-Fayyum following the murder last week of the local police chief, security sources reported Monday.

The sources, quoted by the Egyptian news agency MENA, said all the detainees were members of extremist Muslim groups splintered from the al-Jihad movement, notably al-Shawqiyun.

The search operations extended to the neighboring district of Bani Suwayf, where 18 suspects were arrested in a police ambush as they fled al-Fayyum, about 100 kilometers (62 miles) southwest of Cairo, MENA said without specifying when they were apprehended.

Egyptian police have conducted regular manhunts of suspected fundamentalists in al-Fayyum, notably in their strongholds of Ka'ak and Ibshaway.

Police chief Ahmad 'Ala'-al-Din was shot dead by assailants on motorcycles while he patrolled downtown al-Fayyum in his car.

Two years ago the villages of al-Fayyum Province were the scene of violent clashes between fundamentalists and security forces.

Reportage on Visit of Armenian Foreign Minister

Meets With Mubarak

NC0903104992 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1020 GMT
9 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 9 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received Armenian Foreign Minister Raffi Ovanesyan at the presidential office in Heliopolis this morning. Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa attended the meeting.

The Armenian foreign minister said his meeting with President Mubarak was very cordial and significant. He emphasized that relations between Egypt and Armenia are firm and strong and that the two countries must strengthen these historical and traditional relations and raise them to an even higher level.

In a statement he made after the meeting, Ovanesyan said that Armenia is looking to establish diplomatic relations with Egypt and create ties in the economic, cultural, commercial, scientific, and technical fields. Referring to democracy in Egypt, he said: Egypt has always had experience with democracy, so we will follow

the same example. He added that Armenia is an inseparable part of the Middle East and will participate in the region's peace process.

As for the dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian foreign minister said that this is not a political or religious dispute but rather a question of human rights and the right to self-determination. He added that Armenia seeks a political solution to this complicated and very difficult issue.

On this issue, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said: All I can (?say) is that we desire a peaceful solution in accordance with international laws and norms.

The Armenian foreign minister replied: We came to Egypt because it has experience in reaching a peaceful solution which resolves many serious problems.

As for the death of former Israeli Prime Minister Menahem Begin and the peace process, Musa said: We hope that the peace process will continue and be strengthened because peace is necessary for the Middle East. At the same time, there must be justice, and a just, peaceful solution must be reached. This has been Egypt's goal since the start of the peace process.

'Amr Musa added: Israel must hand back the occupied territories and peaceful relations must be established in the Middle East on the basis of peace for all and restoring the Palestinian people's legitimate rights and Arab territories.

Diplomatic Ties Established

NC0903155792 Paris AFP in English 1352 GMT
9 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, March 9 (AFP)—Armenian Foreign Minister Raffi Ovanesyan warned Monday that the presence of Turkish troops on the Armenian border could provoke a regional conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh.

"The conflict threatens to degenerate into a regional crisis," he said in remarks published in Arabic by the MIDDLE EAST NEWS AGENCY (MENA) as Egypt and Armenia agreed to establish diplomatic ties.

"We are not optimistic about Turkey's attitude and the presence of Turkish soldiers on the border," Ovanesyan was quoted as saying.

But he added that his country sought a peaceful solution to the fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh, a mainly Armenian-populated enclave in the Republic of Azerbaijan, according to MENA.

He also accused Azerbaijan of seeking to impose a military solution on the problem and insisted on the need to guarantee the right of self-determination for the enclave's Armenian majority.

Ovanesyan and Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa signed the agreement to establish diplomatic ties

between Cairo and Yerevan and to open embassies soon in the two capitals, MENA said, quoting the Egyptian Foreign Ministry.

The Armenian minister met earlier with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and discussed bilateral relations and international issues, MENA added, without giving details.

Ovanesyan Departs for Brussels

NC0903153992 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1500 GMT
9 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 9 Mar (MENA)—Armenian Foreign Minister Raffi Ovanesyan left Cairo this evening for Brussels after a two-day visit to Egypt during which he met with President Hosni Mubarak. He also held talks with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa dealing with bolstering bilateral relations in all fields.

Ovanesyan said prior to his departure that he exchanged views on cooperation between Egypt and Armenia [words indistinct] his visit as positive and good. He pointed out that an agreement was signed establishing diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level between Egypt and Armenia.

He affirmed that the relations between his country and all the republics of the Commonwealth are good. He also emphasized that there is no sectarian dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Paper Criticizes U.S. Policy Toward Libya

NC0903064992 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2240 GMT
8 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—AL-AHRAM has criticized the U.S. stand on Libya demonstrated by the U.S. Administration's rejection of all Libyan proposals and steps to avert a grinding crisis triggered by U.S.-led demands that Libya hand over the suspects in the bombing of the U.S. and French aircraft.

In an editorial in its 9 March issue AL-AHRAM emphasizes that Libya has spared no effort to avert a new conflagration in the region and has made a variety of offers.

The newspaper notes that Libya has proposed handing over the suspects to the United Nations or trying them in a neutral country. It has also proposed submitting the issue to the International Court of Justice.

The newspaper expresses regret that Washington has ignored all these proposals and instead has hastened to consult with Britain and France to speed up a new UN Security Council resolution imposing diplomatic, economic, and military sanctions on Libya.

AL-AHRAM concludes that despite Libya's desire to alleviate the situation, the West looks as if it needs a propaganda issue to exploit during the election period.

Morocco

Political Parties Applaud Changes to Constitution

LD0603212492 Rabat MAP in English 1225 GMT
6 Mar 92

[Text] Rabat, March 6 (MAP)—Leaders of several Moroccan opposition political parties voiced satisfaction at the amendment of the 1972 Constitution announced Tuesday by King Hassan II in the throne day speech.

In statements circulated Thursday by Saudi daily "AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT", secretary general of the Istiqlal Party (nationalist) Mohamed Boucetta said the royal speech meets his party's proposals and stand on the matter. He recalled that the various bodies of his party have claimed the amendment of the Constitution and the drafting of new electoral laws.

King Hassan II announced Tuesday in the speech he delivered on the occasion of Throne Day that the provisions of the Constitution ruling the relationship between the legislative and executive powers will be amended shortly and that the draft amended Constitution will be submitted to the people's approval through a referendum.

Secretary General of the Party for Progress and Socialism (PPS/pro-Communist) Ali Yata expressed appreciation for the content of the royal speech pointing out that it was necessary to take decisions, in a near future, on the government that will supervise the implementing of the program announced by the sovereign.

He wished the cabinet be formed of delegates of all Moroccan political parties.

Leader of the National Popular Movement Majoubi Aherdane deemed the amendment "necessary" to clarify responsibility at the political level. He however ruled out the possibility to adopt the British pattern or that of any other Western country. "The Moroccan sovereign is the symbol of national unity...and the referee of political parties", Aherdane said.

"A genuine democratic system can be enforced only through free and honest elections, a parliament that fully shoulders its responsibilities and a cabinet stemming from and responsible before this parliament", said Secretary General of the National Union of Popular Forces (UNFP) Abdallah Ibrahim.

The UNFP leader also called for the setting up of a high constitutional court that will see to the constitutionality of laws and the creation of a national commission that will review the laws inherited from the colonial era as well as the laws deemed anti-democratic or contrary to the Constitution spirit.

Secretary General of the "Confederation Democratique du Travail" [Democratic Confederation of Labor] (CDT) and member of the Political Bureau of the

Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP) Noubir Amaoui told the Saudi daily that the royal decision was "a new evidence to the sovereign's loyalty and commitment to meet the claims of the opposition".

He expressed hope that the amendments would be adopted in agreement with all the political and social forces of the country.

King Hassan, Party Leaders Hold Working Session

LD0703203992 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 7 Mar 92

[Excerpt] His Majesty King Hassan II, may God make him victorious, presided yesterday evening at the Royal Bureau over a working session with the chairmen of the national political parties—Messrs. Ahmed Osman, chairman of the National Independent Rally; Abdellatif Semlali, of the Constitutional Union; Mohamed Boucetta, secretary general of the Istiqlal Party; Mohamed Yazghi, of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces; Mohamed Tensar, secretary general of the Popular Movement; Mohamed Arsalane el-Jadidi, secretary general of the National Democratic Party; Majoubi Ahdane, secretary general of the National Movement; Ali Yata, secretary general of the Party of Progress and Socialism; and Mohamed Ben Said, secretary general of the Democratic and Popular Organization for Action. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Battles With 'Popular Army' Continue

PM0603122892 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 4 Mar 92 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Khartoum Asserts Its Control; Garang Rejects Campaign"]

[Excerpts] Khartoum, Cairo, London, AL-HAYAH—The Sudanese Army has announced that its forces, which recently started a large-scale offensive against their opponents in the South, are in control of the situation. But sources close to the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) led by Colonel John Garang have announced that the attacking forces were ambushed by the "Popular Army" between the towns of Waw and Uwayl, in Bahr al-Ghazal Province. Richard Mula, a spokesman for the movement in London, told AL-HAYAH that the movement's forces under the leadership of Col. John Garang destroyed the railway line at three points between the two towns, thus halting the advance of the government forces which had moved south from western Sudan two weeks earlier.

The movement's sources pointed out that the number of casualties on both sides was not known and that the battles were still continuing. Mula said that the movement will issue a statement today or tomorrow to explain "the facts about what happened."

Major General Muhammad 'Abdallah 'Uwaydah, official spokesman for the Sudanese Army, told AL-HAYAH that Army forces were in total control of the situation in the military operations zones in the South. [passage omitted]

John Luke, spokesman for the "al-Nasir" wing which broke away from the movement, told AL-HAYAH by telephone yesterday that the Kenyan church, which is mediating between the two sides, asked them to reassess their positions but did not set a new date for the resumption of the meetings. He added that the recent meeting did not discuss the questions of forming an interim council to unify the movement's two wings or how to choose the leadership, as was originally planned. The talks failed to resolve the first point discussed by the participants which concerns the release of those detained by the two sides. [passage omitted]

Sources close to Col. Garang had told AL-HAYAH that the agreement signed by Dr. Lam Akol with Sudanese Government representative Dr. 'Ali al-Haj in Frankfurt, Germany at the end of January caused disagreement between him and his colleague in the breakaway wing, Riak Mashar. As a result the former was prevented from returning to al-Nasir, where the leadership is based. But Luke denied the report and said that "Akol was not representing himself at the Frankfurt meeting; he was representing the entire al-Nasir wing."

AL-HAYAH has obtained a copy of the agreement reached at that meeting. The text is as follows:

"During the period from 23 to 25 January 1992 two delegations representing the Sudanese Government and the SPLM's provisional national executive committee (al-Nasir wing) met in Frankfurt, Germany to discuss and to hold negotiations on the peace process in Sudan. The government delegation was headed by Dr. 'Ali al-Haj Muhammad, and the movement's delegation (the al-Nasir wing) was headed by Dr. Lam Akol. From among the issues raised within the peace process framework the two sides agreed on the following points:

"1. To determine a transition period starting on the date of the signing of an agreement between the Sudanese Government and the SPLM during which the South would enjoy a special constitutional and political status within the framework of a unified Sudan. After the end of that period the southerners would choose the constitutional status consistent with their national aspirations, without ruling out any options.

"To avert future recourse to armed conflict between the people of the South and the central government as a means of settling constitutional, political, and other disputes, agreed upon constitutional and legal procedures will be drafted in detail and then endorsed through a referendum, in order to explore the views of the parties in question (the people of the South) with regard to their political and constitutional status after the transitional period.

"2. The two sides agreed to participate in the peace talks proposed to be held in Abugga as soon as possible.

"3. The two sides discussed the system of government during the transitional period, and especially the question of power sharing, the distribution of resources, security arrangements, relief operations, the resettlement of evacuees, and reconstruction. The two sides agreed to negotiate these issues further.

"4. To create conditions permitting a peaceful dialogue and peaceful negotiations the Abugga talks will be preceded by the announcement of a cease-fire throughout southern Sudan and the other areas affected by the fighting in northern Sudan."

Nasir Group Says SPLM Killing Nuer Officers

EA0703220592 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1530 GMT
7 Mar 92

[Text] Nairobi, 7th Mar (SUNA)—The Nasir group, which has dissented from the rebel Sudanese People's Liberation Movement [SPLM] has announced that the rebel Garang, carried out during the months of January and February execution campaigns against officers of the Nuer tribe [word indistinct] working for his group. A statement issued by the Nasir group said that the rebel Garang issued orders to his commanders Kwal Manyat and Daniel Obet and a number of other commanders from the Dinka tribe under the command of James Wani Ayta to get rid of officers belonging to the Nuer tribe in their units because he was not confident about their loyalty.

A SUNA correspondent in Nairobi reports that as a result of these orders the following officers were assassinated: Fat Wig Wang, Didi Ruthton, Rath Koda Thorth, James Kibig, Gideon Fatiyan Thawr, Gashat Sai Farith, Tot Long Yaruth and Natis Kawt Satim. Eight officers in Bahr al-Ghazal were murdered while 100 recruits were killed in Laoza.

The statement added that Garang had assassinated these officers and men at the time when agreement had been

reached between the Torit and Nasir groups to release political prisoners under the supervision of the church. The statement added that Garang's tribal group had confirmed that it did not want to end the current differences but wanted to transform them into bloody tribal ones because Garang believed that this would ensure the loyalty of the Dinka [words indistinct]. The statement said that Garang was attempting to widen the basic points of difference which had earlier led to the dissent because of mismanagement, lack of an organizational structure for the movement, violation of human rights, and insistence on unrealistic political objectives.

The statement went on to say that officers in the Torit group had been seized by panic and that 2,000 officers from the Nuer Tribe and Equatoria had fled and regrouped under the command of William Tut in Turiyah out of fear of Garang's brutal attacks. The statement said that Garang, by committing these crimes, had forgotten the terrible consequences of his acts [words indistinct] currently present in Nasir. The statement asked those around Garang to put an end to this situation before it became impossible. The South was not prepared to lose its sons because of hunger [words indistinct] the dictator Garang.

In another development the statement pointed out that aliens had been kidnapped from one of the refugee camps inside Uganda. The kidnapping was carried out by Garang's group. The refugees had earlier fled to Uganda out of fear of Garang's terrorist practices and because his troops behaved like an occupation force.

Civil Aviation Accord Signed With Iran

EA0703063692 Khartoum SUNA in English 0923 GMT
6 Mar 92

[Text] Khartoum, 6 Mar (SUNA)—Sudan and Iran Thursday in Tehran, Iranian capital, signed an agreement on the field of civil aviation pertinent to opening an airline [route] between Khartoum and Tehran. The agreement provides a broad framework for wide going cooperation covering the training spheres related to the civil aviation.

Kuwait

Government Says Iraq Reneging on POW Pledges *LD0803202392 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1840 GMT 8 Mar 92*

[Text] United Nations, 8 Mar (KUNA)—Kuwait today rejected the Iraqi regime's claims that it holds no more Kuwaiti or other prisoners. Kuwait's UN Ambassador Muhammad Abu al-Hasan described this claim as contradicting documents on the subject released by the Iraqi regime itself. Kuwait's ambassador and permanent delegate to the United Nations said in a statement to KUNA that the Iraqi regime is contradicting its claim contained in a letter dated 27 February in which it promised to publish the names of all prisoners, hostages, and detainees, and to allow the International Red Cross to carry out inspections.

Abu al-Hasan also disclosed that the allied countries which defeated the Iraqi regime's forces in the war to liberate Kuwait will tomorrow protest in a letter to the UN secretary general Iraq's attempt to dodge the implementation of its commitment to clarify the fate of prisoners. Ambassador Abu al-Hasan pointed out that five of the alliance countries have signed this letter, i.e. the United States, Britain, France, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait.

REUTER has reported Iraq's allegation which Ahmad Husayn, foreign minister of the Iraqi regime, made today after a meeting with representatives of the International Red Cross Committee.

On 16 October 1991 the international alliance asked the Iraqi regime to publish in the Iraqi official gazette and also in all Iraqi newspapers the names of all prisoners and detainees that it holds. The government of the Iraqi regime promised in the letter which it addressed to the UN secretary general, and which was signed by the foreign minister of that regime, to publish a complete list

of the Kuwaiti prisoners' names and to allow representatives of the International Red Cross to visit the prisoners and the detention camps.

Abu al-Hasan said that no Iraqi newspaper has so far published this Kuwaiti list and that what the officials of the Baghdad regime are now saying is merely a repetition of what they have always said.

Jordanians in Iraqi 'Espionage Ring' Arrested

*NC1003120492 Cairo MENA in English 1140 GMT
10 Mar 92*

[Text] Kuwait, March 10 (MENA)—The Kuwaiti security forces arrested members of an espionage ring working for the Iraqi intelligence, today's AL-SIYASAH AL-KUWAYTIYAH said. The ring involves four Jordanians who admitted that they were trained to use weapons and make explosives in Yemen.

Saudi Arabia

Opposition Alliance Statement Calls for Democracy

*JN0903113492 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0740 GMT
9 Mar 92*

[Text] Baghdad, 9 Mar (INA)—The opposition Saudi National Democratic Alliance [al-Tajammu' al-Watani al-Dimuqrati al-Su'udi] has emphasized that the only solution to Saudi Arabia's serious difficulties and decay can only be achieved through democracy.

In a statement the alliance denounced the Saudi regime's prosecution and elimination of the opposition through various means, including the stripping of citizenship of prominent nationalistic figures and intellectuals and pursuing and threatening them in exile.

The statement says that the promises made by the Saudi authorities concerning the basic law of government, the regions statute, and the setting up of a so-called shura [consultative] council will only further complicate the situation.

'Aziz Arrives in New York for UN Talks

JN1003075192 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0720 GMT
10 Mar 92

[Text] New York, 10 Mar (INA)—Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz and the delegation accompanying him arrived in New York at dawn today.

An INA correspondent in New York said that the delegation accompanying 'Aziz comprises Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, minister of state for foreign affairs, and a number of economic and military experts.

The deputy prime minister will begin his meetings with UN officials later this morning, Tuesday, New York time. He will meet with Venezuelan Ambassador Diego Arria, president of the UN Security Council. This will be followed by a meeting with the representative of the Nonaligned states which are UN Security Council members. Tariq 'Aziz is scheduled to meet this afternoon with UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Ghali.

The high-level Iraqi delegation will tomorrow morning, Wednesday, attend the UN Security Council's session at which Tariq 'Aziz is expected to review Iraq's compliance with the UN Security Council resolutions.

Armed Forces 'On Alert;' Popular Uprising Feared

NC0803171992 (Clandestine) Voice of the Kurdistan
Revolution Radio in Arabic 1520 GMT 8 Mar 92

[Text] The Iraqi Government has placed its armed forces and security and intelligence agencies in Baghdad and other cities on alert, fearing an outbreak of a new popular uprising on the first anniversary of last year's valiant efforts.

Travelers from Baghdad report that military forces now encircle Baghdad and that all cars entering and exiting the city are searched.

Clashes Between Army, Kurdish Fighters Reported

'Several' Killed in Marshlands Attacks

NC0503190492 (Clandestine) Voice of the Iraqi
People in Arabic 1700 GMT 5 Mar 92

[Text] The tyrant regime's forces recently launched a new military attack against (Umm al-Halib), (al-Tarrabah), Umm al-Shuwayj, (al-Khuyut), and (Umm Bahlul) in the marshland areas in al-'Amarah. Two brigades belonging to the 11th Division took part in the attack.

Sources in the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq stated that the tyrant's troops bombarded Zaji for two consecutive days. The sources note that the defeated regime's troops launched wide-scale arrest and storming operations against peaceful homes on the outskirts of the marshlands and arrested several young people. Several young men were martyred when they

refused to obey the oppressive arrest orders and engaged in an armed confrontation with the regime's henchmen.

'Heavy' Shelling of Kurdish Positions

NC0903170292 (Clandestine) Voice of the People
of Kurdistan in Arabic 1605 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] At noon on 8 March the dictator's artillery began heavy shelling of the peshmerga headquarters and positions on the Kurdish front in the villages of (Velo), (Rahim 'Aqutah), and (Kwafut), in (Shawan) District. The enemy forces then launched an offensive from several axes against the peshmerga positions, supported by an artillery barrage and six helicopters. These axes were: the Kafar Dalwah axis, the Bargal-Dalwah axis, and the (Durjikan-Dalwah) axis.

Peshmergas of the Kurdistan Front in the [words indistinct] in the (Shawan) area belonging to the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and the 4th Battalion belonging to the Socialist Party of Kurdistan confronted the offensive. Our forces succeeded until noon today in killing some of the enemy, destroying eight armored vehicles, and taking 21 prisoners.

The clashes are continuing in the area.

Battles 'Raging' Near Karkuk

JN1003102392 Paris Radio Monte Carlo
in Arabic 1000 GMT 10 Mar 92

[Text] Battles have been raging since yesterday between the Iraqi Army and Kurdish fighters near Karkuk, in northern Iraq. This was announced in Damascus today by a spokesman for the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. The spokesman affirmed that Iraqi forces yesterday launched an attack on three villages in the (Shawan) area using tanks, helicopters, and heavy weapons.

DPK, Authorities Discuss Fighting

NC0903164192 Paris AFP in English 1600 GMT
9 Mar 92

[Text] Tehran, March 9 (AFP)—A Kurdish delegation visited Baghdad last week for talks with officials there on the fighting in Iraqi Kurdistan, a Kurdistan Front source disclosed here Monday.

The source said the group from the Democratic Party of Kurdistan (DPK) of Mas'ud Barzani was on a four-day visit during which it met "senior authorities."

The Kurdistan Front is a coalition of eight Kurdish movements opposed to the Iraqi Government.

Iraqi forces, who crushed a rebellion in northern Kurdish regions a year ago, have continued to clash with rebels despite several rounds of talks between political leaders of the two sides.

The source said the recent Baghdad talks focused on confrontations between February 28 and March 3 as well as on the embargo the Kurds say Baghdad has imposed on their region.

Iraqi authorities apparently asked the DPK, following the clashes, to send representatives for discussions in Baghdad.

The recent fighting led to "numerous deaths" among Iraqi Army ranks and left 25 soldiers as prisoners of war, the source said, adding that five Kurdish fighters were killed.

The DPK meetings in Baghdad took place despite the fact that negotiations between the Iraqi Government and the Kurds on autonomy for Kurdistan are suspended.

Saddam Sending Reinforcements to North Iraq

NC0503095292 Istanbul *MILLIYET* in Turkish
27 Feb 92 p 15

[Ali Haydar Yurtsever report: "Fear of a Spring Operation in Iraq"]

[Excerpts] Fearing that Turkey will launch a military operation against the Kurdish Workers Party [PKK], the Iraqi Administration has begun to build fortifications in northern Iraq. President Saddam Husayn has transferred the military units of the 3d Army Corps, which was assigned to control the northern sector of the al-Bashrah region after the Gulf war, to Karkuk, Karbala', and al-Mawsil. This move has been assessed as an initiative aimed at warning the Kurds and Turkey. [passage omitted]

The units of the 3d Army Corps have completely besieged Karkuk, Karbala', and al-Mawsil, and large military units have been deployed in the Karkuk and al-Maswil regions. They have set up their tents on the outskirts of the two cities. New garrisons and military lodgings are being built in many areas. The military units have established checkpoints on the roads to Karkuk, Karbala', and al-Mawsil. The guard posts constructed near the checkpoints indicate that they will be there a long time. [passage omitted]

Divide and Rule

One of the main reasons that Saddam Husayn has not created an uproar over the effort by the allied forces to create an autonomous region for the Kurds in northern Iraq is his intention to see to it that a group he can manipulate establishes an administration in northern Iraq. [passage omitted]

The emergence of the "Kurdistan Front" [Kurdistan Cephesi] in northern Iraq, and which is opposed to Jalal Talabani and Mas'ud Barzani, confirms that Saddam Husayn is pursuing a "divide-and-conquer" policy. The new group will take part in the April elections.

According to reliable sources in Iraq, Saddam Husayn himself has encouraged the establishment of the Kurdistan Front, which is made up of seven Kurdish groups. Meanwhile, various sources have reported that Saddam Husayn has permitted the delivery of vital supplies, including food, fuel, and natural gas, to the regions controlled by the Kurdistan Front and Kurdish leader Nachirvan Barzani. The same sources said that Saddam Husayn continues to maintain his embargo on supplies to the regions controlled by Jalal Talabani and Mas'ud Barzani, and they also note that Saddam Husayn's aim is to incite the Kurdish people against Jalal Talabani and Mas'ud Barzani.

On the other hand, diplomatic sources in Baghdad have said that they fear clashes may again break out in the region depending on the outcome of the April elections.

Talabani Gives Uprising Anniversary Address

NC0903181592 (Clandestine) *Voice of the People of Kurdistan* in Arabic 1608 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] Dear listeners: On the occasion of the first anniversary of the great popular uprising in Kurdistan, brother Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], has delivered an important speech in Kurdish to the masses of Kurdistan over the voice and television of the people of Kurdistan. We hereby read the following important parts of the speech to our Arab listeners:

O struggling masses of Kurdistan: On behalf of the PUK I congratulate you on the occasion of the first anniversary of the historic uprising, the great peerless uprising. The masses of Kurdistan have demonstrated an unprecedented union between the peshmergas and the regime's armed men [musallahi al-nizam] and between the town and the village. It is the union of all classes and sects, a union of the parties and political affiliations in Kurdish society.

This union was a great gain. It not only constituted the most important factor for the victory of the uprising, but it also will lead to the total victory of our people's democratic struggle for liberation and will achieve our people's noble aspirations. Therefore, safeguarding this union is a sacred duty that must be shouldered by every individual.

Brother Jalal added: The strugglers have crowned the great victory of the uprising by liberating Karkuk, the holiest city of cherished Kurdistan, for the first time in the history of Iraq's Kurdistan. This town [words indistinct] in Kurdistan from [word indistinct] to the cherished Karkuk. Then precious Khanaqin, a noble Kurdish town, was liberated. The enemies failed to take this town from Kurdistan by force.

Brother Jalal went on to say that this great historic uprising has proven to the world that the masses of Kurdistan do not accept the dictatorial authority in

Baghdad, the authority which applied the ugliest criminal methods to the masses of Kurdistan. He said: Those who constitute the dictatorial authority in Baghdad are the same ones who killed thousands of Kurdish youth, executed thousands in prisons, and wiped out thousands on mountains with chemical weapons. These same people wiped out the martyr town of Halabjah and the village of (Shaykhwanan) in the Balisan Valley.

Brother Jalal added: Halabjah and (Shaykhwanan) will remain living examples of the chemical crimes committed by the authority in Baghdad. Furthermore, this state is the same one which carried out the al-Anfal operation which claimed the lives of 182,000 people whose fate remains unknown. These included tens of thousands of innocent children, the same number of innocent women, and tens of thousands of innocent youth and elderly persons. They were arrested without any charges and should have been treated as prisoners, but they disappeared and we know nothing of their fate. The law and norms have never permitted the imprisonment of women and children.

A government like that in Baghdad harbors hatred and enmity toward the Kurdish people, pursues dictatorship in its dealings with the Kurdish people, and does not [words indistinct] by keeping a handful of criminal dictators to suck the blood of the Iraqi people, starve Iraq, and plunder its wealth. This government, brother Jalal added, cannot be trusted when dealing with the Kurdish people.

Therefore, we have to learn the lesson and glean the moral that this government cannot be trusted and that there is no scope left for its peaceful coexistence with the Kurdish people. Therefore, as other countries and the Arab people in Iraq desire, this dictatorial government must leave power, disappear from the arena of history, and leave the Iraqi people so that it can be replaced by a democratic system which guarantees democratic freedoms for all the Iraqi people and gives the Kurdish people the right to enjoy self-determination.

Brother Jalal said: There are many facts that need to be stated. The first is that without the participation of all the people all these victories could not have been realized. There is no doubt that those who have made history in Kurdistan this time have once again been the masses of the people.

The second fact is that this uprising did not really start spontaneously and that the people never lost their inspiration. Preparations were made for it beforehand, and the PUK had the honorable role of planning and preparing for this uprising. It also succeeded in imparting its ideas and proposals concerning the uprising to the people in the cities [words indistinct] armed units, and the regime's armed men who received messages from the PUK asking them to prepare themselves for that uprising. Undoubtedly they are now confirming the fact that the PUK was the major force in existence and the only political force deserving to lead and organize the

people in the uprising. It participated directly and effectively with the people by forming the special forces, sending the peshmerga forces to areas near the towns and villages, and fully concentrating the efforts of the PUK organizations on this objective. You all know that the organizations of the PUK in [word indistinct] and all over Kurdistan are the major revolutionary force organizing the revolution and the Kurdistan Front in the homeland.

Therefore, when we talk of the role of the PUK and the effective role of the heroic peshmergas who belong to the PUK, we only wish to reveal one fact, which is that the PUK has led, organized, administered, and ignited this great uprising. By saying this we do not mean to downplay the role of the other forces in Kurdistan.

Brother Jalal said that the third fact is that this great intifadah has created an important turning point in the history of the Kurds which no force can erase. Its results cannot be ignored. We are now going through an important stage and are at a fork in the road at which we need to define the future of our people. One road leads to liberty and democracy for the people of Kurdistan. By taking this road, we will prevent the dictatorial rule in Baghdad from returning to liberated Kurdistan and the Baghdad government from occupying Kurdistan once again and restoring its oppressive circles and organizations to apply against the masses of Kurdistan. This road leads to a free Kurdistan run by its people through free national council elections.

The other road is [word indistinct] and once again leads to the inferno of the Baghdad government. It proceeds from various false excuses we were given here and there that we have no solution other than returning to the Baghdad regime, which means the occupation of Kurdistan once again and the return of the bloody oppression organs.

We believe that choosing this road means choosing the option of annihilation, the option of returning to chemical weapons, al-Anfal operations, death, and destruction.

Choosing this path means recognizing the dictatorship, which means that we become part of the dictatorial regime in Baghdad. This entails that we agree that the Ba'th Party will rule Iraq indefinitely, as the Iraqi Government is requesting; that the dictator be the absolute ruler; and that we recognize him as an idol who must be worshiped, God forbid. He added: Choosing this erroneous path means that we have to antagonize the Iraqi opposition of which we are now a part. The Kurdistan Front is considered to be party to the joint action committee of the Iraqi opposition. What the Iraqi Government is requesting from the Kurdistan Front and wants to impose on it is to antagonize all leaders and parties of the Iraqi opposition. The Iraqi Government wants us to antagonize our Shiite brothers, who, like us,

are suffering from the Baghdad government's oppression. It wants us to antagonize the democratic, progressive, national, and religious parties in Iraq and to stand up to all those who are struggling in Iraq against dictatorship. The Iraqi Government wants to turn us into a big stick to use whenever it wants.

Accepting this is an odious mistake that does not befit the status and reputation of the Kurdistan Front or any of the coalition parties in the Kurdistan Front. After 31 years of democratic liberation revolution, struggle, great sacrifices, and raising the slogan of democracy in Iraq, being part of the dictatorial regime in Baghdad would be a fatal and repulsive mistake. Furthermore, the Iraqi Government is asking for more: It wants us to stand up to neighboring countries, Europe, the United States, and other world countries. It is demanding that we break our relations with the peoples of the world, relations for which we made great sacrifices to establish and which have begun to yield fruit. The Iraqi Government wants our efforts to go up in smoke and to deprive us of the right to establish such ties. The Iraqi Government wants to control the Kurdish people, kill, destroy, use chemical weapons, and to repeat undeterred the al-Anfal operation.

The dictatorial government is also asking us to sever our relations with our Kurdish brothers in the other parts of Kurdistan. It is banning us from establishing relations with the parties in the other parts of Kurdistan.

These unjust conditions which the government is dictating to us do not serve the Kurdish people and their interests. On the contrary, they are against the aspirations and hopes of our people. For this reason the PUK and the majority of the parties allied in the Kurdistan Front have rejected these demands and will not accept them. Therefore, choosing the wrong path means returning to the lap of the Baghdad government. The right way is to choose the path of independence, democracy, and the right to self-determination.

Brother Jalal then spoke about the sufferings and tragedies besetting the people of Iraqi Kurdistan such as the economic blockade, the high cost of living, and the lack of fuel. He said: The masses of the Kurdish people are well aware that their issue is not one of food and fuel, but rather of liberation from the dictatorial government in Baghdad and the attainment of their national rights. Did the 1961 revolution erupt in Kurdistan for the sake of food and fuel? Did our people stage their uprising last year because of the lack of food and fuel? Have our people struggled for 31 years for the sake of food and fuel, or was it for the sake of freedom, democracy, human rights, and the right to self-determination?

The situation is clear to all: The Kurdish people's struggle is a political and social one. It is a struggle to attain national and democratic rights so that the Kurdish individual may live free in Iraq's Kurdistan as a human being of this age, and with his head held high.

Brother Jalal added: The fascist government in Baghdad is the cause of all the calamities and tragedies that have befallen the Iraqi people and the Kurdish people in Kurdistan. If this clique remains in power, the calamities, tragedies, and tribulations will continue in Iraq and Kurdistan. This government is a fascist government, a government of war, of a high cost of living, of crimes, and of murder. It is the government of the al-Anfal operations and of the use of chemical weapons. It is the government that creates tragedies one after another. The continuation of this calamity and plague of a government will bring more bitterness and tragedy upon the people of Iraq and the masses of Kurdistan.

For this reason it is the path of freedom and emancipation and not the path of cooperation with or participation in the government that will eliminate this fascist government. Our people's glorious uprising proved an important fact: namely, that the masses of Kurdistan reject this fascist government. The departure of millions of Kurds from the towns and hamlets and their abandonment of their property and homes are cogent proof of this.

Brother Jalal added: The 'Aflaqite Ba'th Party's plan for our Kurdish people is clear in all its details. This party emphasized this plan during its conference. Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek also referred to it very frankly in the report that he presented to the United Nations. He said in his report that the Iraqi Government has used the method of genocide [preceding word in English] against the Kurdish people. Therefore, this fact has been placed on the record by a prominent foreign political figure after examining several documents in this respect. We experienced this state of affairs in all its details and tasted its bitterness. How can we forget the crimes of those who used chemical weapons for the first time against our people? Who has been seeking to annihilate the Kurds and Kurdistan? Who is seeking with the power of steel and fire to slice off Sinjar, (Tall Akhdar), Zummar, 'Ayn Zalah, Shaykhan, and the area east of Mosul up to Karkuk, Tuz, Khidri, Khanaqin, and [word indistinct] in the north as far as [words indistinct]?

Brother Jalal added: Through the international [word indistinct] through political and diplomatic struggle, by benefiting from the struggle of the Iraqi masses, and by participating in the struggle for democratic and the Iraqi masses' liberation, we must try to compel the Baghdad government to leave the rest of Kurdistan.

Brother Jalal concluded by saying: If we can maintain the unity of our ranks, the unity of the Kurdistan Front, and the unity of the democratic organizations of the masses of Kurdistan; and if we develop the PUK, we will be able to achieve greater victories, to frustrate and destroy all the enemies' plans, and to ensure for our people's masses a free and dignified life in a liberated Kurdistan.

Hoping that we will take the right path, preserve the unity of our rights, and advance toward attaining our

people's hopes for electing a national council and the establishment of a government of the masses; and hoping that we will struggle together to resolve [words indistinct] and that we will not permit the enemy to divide our ranks, I greet you again and congratulate you on the advent of the blessed month of Ramadan. I hope that the 'Id al-Fitr will mark the beginning of the liberation of the people of Kurdistan and the beginning of the liberation of the Iraqi people from the yoke of the dictatorial government.

Kurdistan Legislative Council Debates Events

JN0903183292 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1705 GMT
9 Mar 92

[Text] al-Mawsil, northern Iraq, 9 Mar (INA)—The Legislative Council of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region held an extraordinary session under the chairmanship of its speaker, Baha'-al-Din Ahmad, in Makhmur District, Irbil Governorate, today.

The council discussed the sensitive circumstances that Iraq is facing due to the continuation of the U.S.-Atlantic-Zionist conspiracy against Iraq's firm national unity, security, and independence.

The session was attended by Ja'far 'Abd-al-Karim al-Barzanji, head of the Executive Council of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region, and the secretary generals of the region. The council reviewed preparations to mark the 22d anniversary of the 11 March historic statement and the 18th anniversary of the autonomy law and its legislative and executive institutions.

State Says Food, Medicine Embargo Kills 21,000

JN0903183992 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1230 GMT
9 Mar 92

[All figures as received]

[Text] Baghdad, 9 Mar (INA)—The food and medicine embargo imposed on the people of Iraq has resulted in the death of 21,772 Iraqis of all ages over the past two months.

A Health Ministry report published today said these included 8,081 children under five years of age. They died of diarrhea, acute respiratory and intestinal infections, and communicable diseases. The remaining 13,698 citizens were over five years of age.

According to the report 16.8 percent of newborns throughout Iraq during the past two months weighed less than 2.5 kg. During the last four months of 1990, on the other hand, only 4.5 percent of newborns weighed less than 2.5 kg. The report attributes this increase to malnutrition resulting from the continued unjust economic blockade against Iraq, especially the embargo on food and medicine.

The report maintains that the increase in communicable disease infections over the past year was a result of the shortage of medicines and medical supplies.

According to the report major operations performed in Iraq during the past year declined by 57 percent compared to 1989. Only 78,089 major operations were performed in the past year, compared to 181,506 in 1989.

Laboratory activity in Iraq dropped by 57 percent compared to the 1989 figures, the report says.

The report explains that 1,056,956 citizens suffered from malnutrition-related diseases during the past year. Of them, 12,796 citizens suffered from kwashiorkor, 96,186 from marasmus, and 947,974 from other types of malnutrition, including deficiencies in albumin, calories, and vitamins.

Allegations on Iraqi Threat to U.S. Ridiculed

JN0903112292 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0940 GMT
9 Mar 92

[Text] Baghdad, 9 Mar (INA)—The newspaper AL-QADISIYAH has ridiculed the recent allegations made by the U.S. Administration to the effect that Iraq still constitutes a threat to U.S. national security.

In an article today the paper says: Having seen that Iraq has aborted all conspiratorial schemes one after the other through jihad, steadfastness, and perseverance; rebuilt what was destroyed by the war machine; and dealt with international law in a correct manner, the U.S. Administration began to blow yet another bubble into the air of conspiracy.

The paper adds: The bubble blown by the U.S. Administration—led by its great clown, Bush, who is terrified of the black destiny awaiting him in the elections—is a laughingstock and a cause for astonishment and surprise, on the one hand. On the other, it confirms the extent of their despicable hatred of Iraq's great experience, and their determination to target it with all evil means to achieve their suspicious plans.

The paper adds that the U.S. Administration did not only blow this bubble but it has also unleashed its police dogs to gather from all corners of the globe an orchestra of loiterers and mercenaries [reference to Iraqi opposition] who were made to join agent Fahd to receive from the U.S. Administration and Fahd himself up to 30 [multiples or currency not specified] to agitate their malignant diseases, which ache for money, fortune, and blood.

The paper points out that the increase in the suspect media campaigns, to the extent of making clear threats of a new act of foreign military intervention, is due to the influence that the Zionist entity has on the imperialist U.S. decisionmaking and the dirty role played by some agent Arab regimes which abandoned all principles, honor, and genuine values and sunk deep into treason

and treachery when they joined the enemies of Arabism and Islam in the savage aggression against Iraq.

Paper Views French Efforts To Strike Oil Deal

JN0703093692 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0801 GMT
7 Mar 92

[Text] Baghdad, 7 Mar (INA)—The newspaper AL-QADISIYAH affirms that Iraq will remain a key factor in influencing and affecting regional events despite attempts by Western parties to marginalize its role and abort the pillars of its strength.

In an analysis published today, AL-QADISIYAH, the organ of the Ministry of Defense, notes that news reports of a French effort to conclude an oil agreement with Iraq not only reflect a trade deal in the broad sense but also epitomize an awareness of Iraq's role.

The paper underscores the overall components of Iraq's strength and its special role in the region. It adds that the source of this strength lies in the importance of Iraq's geographical location, its natural resources, and its rich and varied soil, not to mention its historical leadership and its active, creative, and innovative people.

The paper criticizes Washington's deliberate failure to heed this fact, as well as its efforts to use all possible means of pressure and hegemony within the framework of its efforts to build a new world order. What the U.S. Administration has failed to understand, the paper maintains, is that the world will be compelled to deal with Iraq sooner or later, and that the party which attempts to overlook this fact will be the first to lose.

AL-QADISIYAH recalls the convictions of U.S. officials in the Reagan administration with regard to Iraq's special position, influence, and effective regional role. In pursuing this point the paper notes that John Rumsfeld [name as received], the first U.S. envoy to visit Iraq in the eighties, affirmed that Iraq is a prominent country and one not liable to partitioning.

With this statement Ambassador Rumsfeld was responding to a question by President Reagan, who asked him why he insisted on including Iraq in a tour of the region's states which the White House was requesting that he make.

French Oil Company Official Comments

JN0803150292 Baghdad AL-QADISIYAH in Arabic
5 Mar 92 pp 1, 7

[Text] AL-QADISIYAH "Analysis and News Followup"—The state-controlled ELF Aquitaine oil company has emphasized that it is now in contact with Iraq concerning the potential exploitation of some gas and oil wells, as well as to buy Iraqi oil as soon as the economic embargo is lifted, but it said that "the matter has to do with most basic procedures."

A company spokesman said discussions on exploiting gas and oil wells on Majnun Island and Nahr 'Umar Island in southern Iraq had begun before the aggression against Iraq and now coincided with talk about signing agreements to import Iraqi oil once the embargo is lifted. He added: "It is a purely industrial and initial measure. Therefore, the government does not have to be aware of it at this stage."

The French Total company confirmed these reports and said that in coordination with ELF it was holding talks on the matter in Baghdad.

Meanwhile, the Paris weekly LE CANARD ENCHAINE reported yesterday that French President Mitterrand and Foreign Minister Roland Dumas are being kept up to date on contacts by French ventures with the Iraqi oil sector.

An ELF company official said yesterday that Iraq will not be embargoed forever and that we are preparing for the time when Iraq returns to the international community.

Al-Hakim Criticizes 'Distortion' of Saudi Visit

NC0503185392 (Clandestine) Voice of the Iraqi
People in Arabic 1700 GMT 5 Mar 92

[Text] The Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] has announced that certain mass media have fiendishly attempted to present SAIRI Chairman Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim's visit to Saudi Arabia in a distorted manner by attempting to link it to a regional tour by Western officials.

Al-Hakim told reporters that during his visit to Syria he noticed that some media were misrepresenting the issue. He added: At the time we wondered if the distortion was deliberate or whether these media had no clear idea of the objectives of the visit.

He continued: Although my visit to Saudi Arabia was announced over two months ahead of time, we noticed that some people who try to obstruct cooperation among the region's states and block communication between the people's movement in Iraq and neighboring countries sought to misrepresent the visit.

Al-Hakim said that he noticed two mistakes in some reporting: first, that his visit was linked to the regional tour by Western politicians; and second, that we were attempting to hold an Iraqi opposition conference in Saudi Arabia. That was not one of the objectives of our visit, al-Hakim said, adding: These misrepresentations seek to show that the Iraqi opposition cannot agree on matters.

Iraqis, Egyptians Appointed to Interest Sections

NC0903113592 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1107 GMT
9 Mar 92

[Text] Baghdad, 9 Mar (MENA)—MENA's correspondent in Baghdad has learned that two Iraqis have been appointed to work in the Iraqi interests section in Egypt. The two Iraqis are Qays al-'Ani, who will be in charge of the section, and Isma'il Hassunah.

The correspondent has also learned that al-'Ani and Hassunah will leave Baghdad in the second half of March to assume their duties.

Two Egyptians, Mahmud Khayrallah, who is in charge of the Egyptian interests section in Iraq, and Ayman 'Abd-al-Qadir, who works in the section, arrived in Baghdad at the end of February to assume charge of the consular work required by the approximately 250,000 Egyptians living in Iraq.

Diplomatic relations between Egypt and Iraq were broken at the start of the Gulf war, and India is in charge of the two countries' interests in each country.

Syrian Ba'th Party Allegedly Criticizes al-Asad

JN0703135192 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1015 GMT
7 Mar 92

[Excerpt] Damascus, 7 Mar (INA)—The Regional Command of the Syrian Arab Socialist Ba'th Party has urged the Syrian people to further close their ranks, to step up the means of mobilization and struggle, and to adhere to national unity in order to finish the agent Hafiz al-Asad regime once and for all and to restore Syria's freedom and its national and pan-Arab role.

In a statement marking the anniversary of the 8 March 1963 Revolution the Regional Command said that the treasonous Hafiz al-Asad regime is desperately attempting to delude the masses of our people into believing that it will show concern for the national soil and the rights of the nation during the reconciliation [al-taswiyah] talks. The statement adds, however, that this regime's record, which is replete with treason and crimes, as well as the role that it is actually playing, demonstrate that it has completely surrendered to the schemes of the Zionists and imperialists as well as to their objectives with regard to the liquidation of the Palestine question. [passage omitted]

Shamir Still Wants Guarantees; on Baker Remarks

TA1003124592 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1005 GMT 10 Mar 92

[Excerpt] The Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee hosted Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir today. Our correspondent Yo'el Nir talked with the prime minister after he left the meeting:

[Begin recording] [Nir] First, one day after Menahem Begin's death the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee dealt with the political-security legacy of the late prime minister, who had been a member of the committee almost from its inception. After he left the committee meeting, Mr. Shamir was first asked about issues on the agenda—for example, the reports that there are those in Israel who are prepared to give up the loan guarantees.

[Shamir] Some people may have such ideas. I was recently asked about this, and I said that we are not giving them up. I see no reason to do that. Our proposal is justified; there is no reason for the United States to refuse our request. The United States has always helped in everything linked to immigrant absorption, especially Russian and Ethiopian aliyah. We need those funds for the absorption of that aliyah. We looked for a way to ask for aid without harming U.S. economic interests. I say that there is no reason for us to give it up.

[Nir] Mr. Shamir was then asked about former New York Mayor Ed Koch's claim about what Secretary of State James Baker had allegedly said: Fuck the Jews.

[Shamir] It is not a question of believing that he said it or not. If the U.S. secretary of state denies it, I tend to accept his denial.

[Nir] Mr. Shamir, what do you see as the late Menahem Begin's political legacy?

[Shamir] It is very difficult to give an off-the-cuff answer to that question. He left a very wide-ranging and deep legacy. We spoke about that in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. I can say that what I regard right now as the core of his legacy is maintaining the integrity of Eretz Yisra'el and unceasing endeavors to achieve peace.

[Nir] Egyptian President Husni Mubarak said yesterday that from his point of view, the Camp David message was: territories in return for peace.

[Shamir] That can be said, but only if he means that the concept of territories refers only to Sinai. Mr. Begin agreed with that. Mr. Begin agreed to give up Israeli control over all of Sinai, but in return he wanted the Arabs to agree to total Israeli control and sovereignty over all of Eretz Yisra'el west of the Jordan River, including Jerusalem and the areas of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Editorials Consider Baker's Reported Remarks**No 'Personal Anti-Semitism' Seen**

TA0903130792 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
9 Mar 92 p B1

[Editorial: "A Personal Indiscretion Is Not Policy"]

[Text] The State Department spokesperson categorically denied what former New York Mayor Ed Koch told THE NEW YORK POST: that in a closed meeting, Secretary of State James Baker had used demeaning and insulting language about the Jews in America. We should not give the denial too much credence; it stands to reason that Baker did utter the words the paper attributes to him.

Had 75 percent of the Jews in America voted for George Bush in the previous election, Baker would probably have been more careful not to offend Jewish voters. If that had been the case, the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, the recognized representative of the Jews of America, would probably have been more successful in steering U.S. policy in the Middle East in a more pro-Israeli direction than it is going at the moment. The Israeli Government, however, cannot maneuver the Jewish vote in the U.S. Presidential election. If it tried to do that, it would anger the rival party.

Israel cannot ignore the influence of partisan considerations on the Washington administration. If the secretary of state chastises Seymour Reich over the fact that only 25 percent of the Jewish community gave its vote to the Republicans in the last election and asks him "What do you want from us?" with regard to U.S. policy toward Israel and the Arabs, Israel cannot protest. Yitzhaq Shamir may argue that "there is no link" between the guarantees and settlement, but being a politician and party leader, he should come to terms with the fact that the U.S. Administration also mixes foreign policy with domestic partisan considerations and accept it as one of the facts of life in a democratic regime.

It is altogether a different ball game if Baker is giving vent to his outrage as a politician by insulting the Jews of America as a group of definite religious and national identity (an "ethnic" group, as current U.S. fashion would have it). Some Israelis may dismiss the outburst of scorn and anger—"Fuck the Jews"—as an expletive of the kind even President Richard Nixon would not have been loath to use in certain private circles. This choice of words, however, calls for a sharp denunciation, not an apologetic attitude.

Could Baker's words prove that his Middle East policy is based on personal anti-Semitism? Quite a few Israelis would be only too happy to buy this explanation; however, the abominable style the secretary of state saw fit to use notwithstanding, we would be wrong to succumb to such a temptation. It is generally believed that the sector of U.S. society from which the Republican Party traditionally selects its national leadership is not totally

devoid of anti-Jewish sentiments, but it is a long way from there to asserting that the position of these officials toward the Arab-Israeli conflict is based on their being born and bred anti-Semites.

The Middle East policy of President Bush and Secretary Baker is guided by U.S. interests, as they perceive them. The Likud government may object to it, but it had better not denounce it as an expression of hatred toward Israel. Baker's indiscretion does not free the Israeli Government from the need to take stock of its actions. Its resentment, justified by Baker's remarks, does not free our government from its obligation to look for ways to restore the understanding with official Washington.

End to Escalation Urged

TA0803153692 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR
in Hebrew 8 Mar 92 p 9

[Editorial: "Unnecessary Campaign of Accusations"]

[Text] Various statements by government circles, which former New York Mayor Ed Koch has now joined, point to the fact that the Israeli Government has decided to fight Bush and Baker with all the means at its disposal in a war to the bitter end.

Expressions such as those by Deputy Minister Binyamin Netanyahu that the United States is trying to push us to Auschwitz borders are a sharp verbal escalation in the dispute over the loan guarantees. Even the remarks by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who insists on continuing settlement without any readiness to draw closer to the administration, do not leave much hope for an agreement with the United States. The remarks by Ed Koch, who although a U.S. citizen is very close to the Israeli Government, introduce a cheap, gossipy element of personal defamation into an otherwise matter-of-fact dispute. "Anonymous Jewish sources" reinforce Koch's remarks. It can therefore be assumed, and this is obvious to all, that there is somebody organizing the campaign of anti-Semitic charges directed at the secretary of state.

There is no logic in pushing Baker into anti-Semitic positions and in presenting him as an enemy of Israel and organizing Jewish public opinion against him. Such actions do not serve any Israeli interest. Despite the Shamir government's tendency to think that Bush will not manage to be reelected in November for a second term, the chances are that he will pass the threshold. His Republican rival Buchanan is an extremist conservative who does not hide his opposition to foreigners and blacks and has also been accused of anti-Semitic expressions. It is difficult to foresee right now a successful Democratic candidate who might compete against an incumbent President. Therefore, Israel might find itself facing a United States led by Bush and Baker for another five years. It is not Israel's business to decide who will be President of the United States, just as it is not the business of the U.S. President to decide who will be the prime minister of Israel. There is, however, no reason to make the President and the secretary of state into

enemies, especially a President who helped so much in bringing the Jews of the former USSR and Ethiopia to Israel, resisted Iranian aggression through direct involvement, and placed at Israel's disposal generous aid to the tune of \$4 billion annually.

Therefore, somebody should explain to the Israeli Government that it should climb down from the tree of verbal escalation against the team at the helm in the United States. Cutting Israel off from the United States and from all its friends in the international arena will not bring Shamir more votes in Israel.

Arens on U.S. Actions Against North Korean Ship

TA0903185992 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English
1800 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by David Ze'ev; place and date not given]

[Text] Reporter David Ze'ev asked Defense Minister Moshe Arens if Israel is cooperating with, or at least encouraging, any American move against the North Korean freighter?

[Begin Arens recording] It is not for us to tell the United States what to do under such circumstances. I think we in Israel are pleased that the United States is aware of the fact that Syria, while talking peace, is arming itself to the teeth and is importing Scud missiles from North Korea. It is good that the United States is keeping an eye open on that. We have a strategic cooperation with the United States that goes back many years, and I am sure it will continue for many years to come. That strategic cooperation includes also exchange of intelligence now and then. [end recording]

On Allegations Against Baker

TA0903191892 Jerusalem Israel Television Network
in Arabic 1645 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by Eli Nisan at the Knesset on 9 March; recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Nisan] Mr. Arens, you will visit the United States next week. How do you view U.S.-Israeli relations in light of the publications regarding Baker's remarks against Jews?

[Arens] When I am discussing our relations with the United States, I do not refer to those publications at all, and I do not believe that we need to bother ourselves with those publications, which, to the best of my knowledge, are not true. We currently have some differences of opinions, but we also agree on certain issues—for example, as you mentioned earlier, the U.S. monitoring of the ship carrying missiles to Syria. During my visit, I will meet my counterpart, Mr. Cheney. There is strategic cooperation between Israel and the United States, which we will continue cultivating. It demonstrates our close relations.

[Nisan] Do you regard U.S.-Israeli relations to be as stable as before?

[Arens] Fundamentally, yes. There are ups and downs, as might be expected, but our relations have very solid foundations of common values and ideals that lead both countries to share strategic interests. [passage omitted]

On Attack in Turkey

TA0903181892 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1500 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] Defense Minister Moshe Arens said today that the terrorist attack in Turkey [in which an Israeli Embassy security officer was killed on 7 March] does not represent a new facet of Hizballah activities. According to him, terrorist organizations will try to carry out more such attacks. Arens made those remarks at the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. He also stated that Israel's strategic ties with the United States are presently good, and that Israel's situation is good. Udi Segal reports:

Terrorist organizations will plan more assassinations such as the one in Turkey, and it is the free world's mission to stop them. Those remarks were made by Defense Minister Moshe Arens. Was the attack staged in retaliation for the elimination of al-Musawi? Arens says Hizballah needs no reasons:

[Begin Arens recording] Regrettably, Hizballah is a murderous organization that for many years has been killing people in and out of Lebanon and taking hostages. This attack represents nothing new; the organization is simply an evil we have to combat. [end recording]

The defense minister made these remarks after a Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee session. At the meeting, the Northern Command commander briefed the committee members on the security situation along the border, and explanations about the security forces' activities in the territories were provided.

Knesset Member Mordekhay Gur voiced concern over the state of the Israeli-U.S. ties. Arens stressed that defense relations between us and the Americans are founded on common strategic interests and are not the result of any one minister's doctrine. As for the strategic situation in general, he said that with the collapse of the USSR, the likelihood of a war with Syria has declined.

[Begin Arens recording] The State of Israel's strategic situation has improved in the wake of the changes in the USSR, because the USSR, unlike in the past, no longer supports the Arab countries unreservedly. [end recording]

The principal rule in strategy, said the minister, is not to put all your eggs in one basket. The Americans attach importance to maintaining good relations with us, despite their ties with Arab countries. From our viewpoint, reiterated Minister Arens, canceling the Lavi project was a mistake.

Shamir Eulogizes Begin at Cabinet Meeting

TA0903193392 Jerusalem GOVERNMENT PRESS
OFFICE in English 1530 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Remarks by Prime Minister Shamir at the cabinet session in Jerusalem on 9 March]

[Text] The Government of Israel and the entire people of Israel today mourn the passing of the sixth prime minister, Menahem Begin, of blessed memory.

From this room, in which he—over the course of six years and two months—conducted sessions of the Government of Israel, we, ministers of Israel, send our condolences to his son, daughters, granddaughters and grandsons, and to all members of his family.

A great man has been uprooted from among us. A leader who towered from above, one of the most valued of the nation, the distinguished student of Betar leader Ze'ev Jabotinsky. Our teacher and master, our beloved one and our leader, Menahem Begin left behind a people in great pain, enveloped in anguish, mourning and with heads bowed. He also left behind a distinguished heritage of strong leadership and monumental achievements for the people of Israel and for Eretz Yisra'el.

His actions will be remembered forever, both as the commander of the Etzel [Irgun] and leader of the revolt against foreign rule, and as the prime minister who brought about the first peace treaty with an Arab state; who forged our hold over parts of the homeland that were liberated in the Six-Day War; who proclaimed Israeli sovereignty over the Golan; who severed the nuclear arm of the Iraqi ruler; who fought for the immigration of the Jewish people—from the Soviet Union as well as from Ethiopia, in "Operation Moses," which he initiated.

This great heritage surely is etched in his acts, his speeches and his writings; a heritage whose entirety speaks of the right of the Jewish people to its homeland; of the just war of the people for its existence and its security in its land; for the Jewish and democratic character of the state; for internal unity and the minimizing of disputes among us as much as possible; for the welfare of all social strata, urban and rural; for the integration of the Exiles and the removal of intercommunal barriers; for the supreme values of humanity and Judaism, liberty and justice for all human beings, and, especially, liberty and justice for the persecuted Jewish people, exiled for 2,000 years. And, for the sake of the establishment of the largest political movement in Israel—the Likud—which carried his doctrine in hand and acted and spoke according to his instruction.

Among the central traits of his personality was adherence to Jewish tradition. The Bible for him was the greatest source of inspiration. The pleasant verses of the hymns of Israel were like music to his ears. And, Menahem Begin, moreover, as was his custom with all humankind, was the exemplar of "he who sees as equal and makes

equal the least and the greatest." His affection for all Israel did not detract from his love of every individual in Israel, regardless of sect or status, and the masses of the House of Israel, indeed, returned his love.

It is too early to ascribe and summarize all the works of Mr. Begin. At this moment, we all are overcome with anguish and pain over his having left us—with the State of Israel on the path which he paved for it: the struggle for the widening of the circle of peace, the effort to absorb the waves of immigration, the war against terrorists and those who devise malicious plans for the destruction of Israel and the killing of Jews, settlement activity in all areas of the homeland, growing concern for distressed social strata and for all men.

This is a day of intense mourning for the Jewish people, in Israel and in the Diaspora. This is a day on which we salute a great man of the nation, a leader, commander, guide, thinker, dreamer, prominent Jew, the sixth prime minister. This inspiration will be with us for many generations. In the spirit of his deeds and doctrine, we will march forward and march the nation forward towards its national goals. Thus, the memory of Menahem Begin will be cherished forever.

Menahem Begin will be interred today in the soil of Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, for whose liberation and unification he dreamed and fought, a dream he merited having seen realized. The entire nation accompanies him on his final journey to the Mount of Olives and takes leave of a dear and beloved man, a leader who arises in a nation perhaps only once in the course of a generation.

The Lord will comfort members of the family among the remnant of the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem, and He will grant that its suffering will not be increased even more. Let us hope that the words of the prophet will come to pass: "And He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord God will wipe away the tears from off all faces" (Isaiah 25:8).

Leaders Send Messages on Death of Begin

Ghali, Thatcher; BBC Changes Story

TA0903174392 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1700 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] UN Secretary General Butrus Ghali, who was privy to the discussions that led to the peace agreement with Egypt, praised Menahem Begin's courage and vision. In a statement he published today, Ghali expresses the hope that the next generation of Israeli and Arab leaders demonstrate similar determination to promote peace.

Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said today that Menahem Begin was a very courageous statesman. He, together with President al-Sadat, managed to bring new hope for peace to the Middle East.

Our correspondent Rafi Rosenfeld reports that BBC Television changed its report on Menahem Begin's life and times—following a protest from the Israeli Embassy. The initial report focused on Menahem Begin's war against the British Mandate, while the new report focused on his efforts to reach the peace accord with Egypt.

France's Mitterrand

TA1003055992 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English
0500 GMT 10 Mar 92

[Text] French President Francois Mitterrand has praised Menahem Begin for laying the foundation stone of a peace agreement. In a message of condolence to President Hayim Herzog, Mitterrand expressed hope that peace would be broadened and security would be achieved for all countries in the Middle East.

UK's Major

TA0903094492 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
0900 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] British Prime Minister John Major has expressed sorrow at Menahem Begin's death and sent condolences to his family and to the people of Israel. A cable sent by Major to Prime Minister Shamir notes that Israel has lost a great leader. Major said that Menahem Begin was a visionary whose historic contribution to the peace process will never be forgotten. The Camp David accords, in which Mr. Begin played an important role, are crucial to the peace process even today, the British prime minister asserted.

Levi Notes 'Unsettled Account' in Ankara Attack

TA0903144492 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1400 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] Ehud Sadan, the security officer of the Israeli Embassy in Turkey who was killed when his car exploded in Ankara on 7 March, was buried this afternoon at the police section of the Mount Herzl cemetery in Jerusalem.

Foreign Minister David Levi eulogized Sadan, saying that we have no dispute with Muslim believers, but we have an unsettled account with the knife- and ax-wielding Islamic Jihad. One hand will chase the murderers while the other will pave the road to peace.

The commander of the police bomb disposal squad and the chief of police eulogized him as well. His son Ohad recited the kaddish and read a poem in his memory.

Delegation Heads Brief Cabinet on Peace Talks

TA0903114092 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
9 Mar 92 p A7

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] During yesterday's cabinet session, the heads of the Israeli delegations briefed the ministers on the latest round of talks in Washington. Elyaqim Rubinstein, head of the team for the talks with the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, reported that seven meetings had been held with the Jordanians and with the Palestinians respectively. Two meetings were also held with the participation of the delegations' entire forum, as well as several informal meetings between the delegation heads.

During the meetings of the forum, an attempt was made to establish a channel of direct contact between the parties and to reach agreement on the venue for the coming rounds of talks. The Arabs did not show any desire to hold direct contacts and no agreement was reached regarding venue. The Jordanians spoke about Resolution 242 and the settlements, while an unsuccessful attempt was made to agree on a joint agenda and to establish joint committees. Informal contacts were held on energy, judicial, and economic issues. The gaps were wide, but there were also areas of agreement.

Rubinstein asserted that the Palestinians did not show readiness to discuss peace and tried to paint a bleak picture in the media. Prior to the next round of talks, the Israeli delegation will attempt to prepare an agenda acceptable to the Palestinians.

As for the separate talks with the Palestinians, Rubinstein reported that a major part of the Palestinian efforts were directed at the media and public opinion and incorporated sharp remarks, such as accusing Israel of racism. After conflicting agendas were presented, the Israeli delegation proposed holding negotiations on the issues that had already been agreed upon, but the Palestinians presented a draft plan for the interim arrangements, which included almost all the characteristics of an independent state.

As published in HA'ARETZ, Rubinstein explained that the Palestinians referred to all the territory, including Jerusalem, and to their right to self-determination during the second stage of the arrangements, including control over land and water resources.

The head of the Israeli team said that the Palestinian proposal does not express any effort to bridge the differences between the parties and deviates from the framework of the process. This could have serious ramifications. The Palestinians also rejected a proposal to establish a joint committee and submitted a daily report on human rights violations in the territories. "This was our first attempt to discuss substantive issues. It is a difficult experience, but we must go through with it," Rubinstein said. He recounted that he had met with the heads of the delegation before every meeting in a bid to establish personal relationships.

Yosi Ben-Aharon, head of the team for the talks with Syria, reported that seven meetings had been held. The meetings were conducted in a businesslike atmosphere, despite moments of tension. "The Syrians are clinging to

Resolution 242 and to the formula of territories for peace," Ben-Aharon said, noting that "they consider themselves the flag bearers of the Arabs and demand our withdrawal from all sectors and the implementation of Palestinian rights." Ben-Aharon added that "the Syrians' real goal is Israel's complete withdrawal without peace. They claim that Israel has been the aggressor all along the way."

Ben-Aharon said: "We brought recordings of Radio Damascus from 1967, which included exhortations such as 'Itbah al-Yahud' [slaughter the Jews]. The Israeli delegation repeatedly asked if the Syrians recognize Israel's legitimacy and raised the issues of Syrian Jewry, Syria's aid to terrorism, its drug dealing, and the presence of Syrian forces in Lebanon." Ben-Aharon remarked that "the Israeli delegation also prepared papers summing up the points of agreement, but the Syrian delegation refused to accept them."

Yosef Hadas, head of the team to the talks with Lebanon, reported that seven lengthy meetings were held. Israel offered peace combined with security, along with the implementation of Resolution 425 regarding the withdrawal of foreign forces from Lebanon. The Lebanese first called for a withdrawal and said that only then would they be ready to address the question of security. They said that Lebanon would sign a peace agreement together with the other Arab countries.

Hadas accused the Lebanese of protecting the terrorist organizations by claiming that they operate only in southern Lebanon. He said that his interlocutors dismissed the significance of the Iranian presence in Lebanon but showed sensitivity regarding the Syrian forces. They would not agree on a joint agenda and refused to establish working teams or exchange documents. "It seems that there is something to talk about, but they clearly are very influenced by the Syrians," Hadas explained.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said that the teams acted according to the government's decisions. Shamir added that additional decisions may be necessary in the future. He pointed out that Israel has no intention of stopping the talks. He asserted that the delegations had acted wisely when they refrained from responding too sharply to the Arabs' statements. "When I thought about negotiations, I pictured these kind of talks. We are not close to attaining our goal; we always said that this would be a long and arduous process," Shamir said.

Shamir expressed satisfaction with the behavior of the United States during the recent round of talks and speculated that this was designed to counterbalance its attitude on the loan guarantees. [passage omitted]

Foreign Ministry Denies Ovitz Admits Espionage

TA0903183792 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1700 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] The Foreign Ministry has denied reports in the Egyptian press that David Ovitz, during his interrogation, allegedly admitted that he had engaged in espionage. Foreign Ministry spokesman Barukh Bina told our political correspondent Arye Golan that in the court hearing of the request to extend his detention, Ovitz stressed that his visits to Egypt were for trade purposes only.

Islamic Movement Head on Murder of Soldiers

TA0703114392 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
0900 GMT 7 Mar 92

[Telephone interview with Shaykh 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish, head of the Israeli Islamic Movement, by 'Adi Talmor; place not given—live]

[Text] [Talmor] Good day, Shaykh Darwish.

[Darwish] Shalom.

[Talmor] Would I be wrong if I said that at least your religious faith calls for jihad—a holy war against the heretics, turning our region into a Islamic religious area, and removing Jews from the Islamic holy sites in Jerusalem?

[Darwish] Whoever interprets our faith in that way simply misunderstands our faith. Whoever accuses Islam of aspiring to remove people from certain locations or converting them to a different religion simply does not understand the issues at hand. Those who make mistaken and provocative statements such as saying that an Islamic movement should set up an Islamic army simply do not understand the Islamic faith or an Islamic movement. My dear friend, it is enough to make one mistake in life. There is no need to make mistakes at every step.

[Talmor] Regarding that, I would like to mention that in the past you were tried for what was called an attempt to set up a terrorist organization.

[Darwish] Well, I agree with you; that is what I mean. Regarding your question on jihad, there must be no confusion between the need to set up an army for an Islamic state—and I stress, only for an Islamic state—and doing that for an Islamic movement.

[Talmor] We understand, however, that at the bottom line, the very existence of the Jewish State of Israel contradicts your world view and aspirations.

[Darwish] My dear friend, if any Muslim believes that, I would advise him to go back to the origins of Islam and study them all over again. My friend, Islam lives in cultural coexistence with both the Jewish people and with Judaism. That is why I am surprised by the attempts to declare that Islam wants to get rid of Judaism or deport or convert the Jews. Can anyone say

that Islam does not accept the establishment of a state for the Jews in the Middle East? No, my friend. The Jews are entitled to their own independent state. I am saying that clearly. I would like to say that on the radio in Arabic. Yes. All the Arab residents of Israel and all those who try to incite against us have to understand that the Jews have a right to an independent state. At the same time, the Palestinians are entitled to an independent state; they have a right to some sort of self-management. I believe we are on the road to reaching that goal, because peace talks are being held today. True, there are many obstacles, but I hope that, at long last, we will reach a solution. The Jews have suffered enough. I have studied modern Jewish history. The Palestinian-Arab nation also has suffered enough. I believe the suffering of both peoples, which could even be called shared suffering, should drive them to common life of coexistence in peace. That is my belief.

[Talmor] Are you worried by the talk and reports about the possibility of restricting the activities of the Islamic Movement in Israel?

[Darwish] Look, I live in this state of law. We are all familiar with the region in which we live. I, as a minority in Israel, am very familiar with Israeli law. Indeed, when something happens, such as this shocking incident that we have all condemned, people begin to have all kinds of thoughts. Some say that they want the Islamic Movement outlawed. I say that a whole movement, which has a particular guiding principle—namely, faith, on the one hand, and adherence to Israeli law, on the other—must not be judged by the acts of a certain eccentric here or there. I hope that relations with the Jews, which I believe to be very good, will be sustained. Our relations with our many Jewish friends—politicians, doctors, philosophers—will remain good and continue to improve. Because I live in a democratic state of law, in a state that really tries to give its residents the most rights possible, I am not worried by any illegal or brutal act. No, I am not worried, because the incident in question involved individuals who represent no one. We must not dwell on the murder and forget all the good things we have in our common home. We must dwell on the good things. We must forget and bury the murder, and not allow the murder to bury us. A murderer will one day be murdered himself. That is written and known. We must not live by our sword. We are not predators. We are civilized human beings, and so we should be. That is our belief in the Islamic Movement. I hope our message came across. Thank you.

[Talmor] As far as I know, according to Islam, the murderers deserve to die, do they not?

[Darwish] Anyone who murders an innocent person and is convicted, according to Islam, yes.

[Talmor] Shaykh Darwish, thank you.

[Darwish] Thank you.

Minister Magen on Legality of Islamic Movement

TA0703121292 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
0900 GMT 7 Mar 92

[Telephone interview with David Magen, minister in charge of Arab affairs, by 'Adi Talmor; place not given—live]

[Text] [Talmor] We hear that in Arab countries—such as Algeria, Egypt, and others—Muslim extremists are being persecuted and their activities are being restricted. Why should Israel be tolerant and patient with such people and what they represent and believe in?

[Magen] As is well known, the State of Israel is a democracy. Any activity within the law is legitimate. When authorized bodies locate groups whose activity is subversion against the very foundations of Israel's existence, such movements are being outlawed. If you are referring to the Islamic Movement, you should know that it is considered a legitimate religious movement in Israel, and its activities are therefore allowed.

[Talmor] We have just heard the movement's leader, Shaykh Darwish, who expressed his full support for the right of the Jewish state to exist, its laws, and activities within the bounds of its laws. Do you believe him?

[Magen] It is hard to answer that question, because I have heard contradictory remarks by some of the leaders of the Islamic Movement. I must stress that their public statements, as far as I have heard or examined them, coincide with the law. At the same time, it is no secret that in the Friday sermons in the mosques, incitement against our state is being heard. There is a whole network of instigation by various imams. The security forces are dealing with such matters, but I would not say that the leadership of the Islamic Movement is exactly preaching absolute loyalty to the state....

[Talmor, interrupting] To say the least.

[Magen] To say the least. I must say that the public statements sound as if they comply with the law, but in back rooms and in mosques calls are often heard that do not belong in a normal country. Those who have to deal with that, do.

[Talmor] Is that not enough to outlaw the Islamic Movement or restrict its activities?

[Magen] Let me remind you that some seven years ago, before the 11th Knesset elections, there was an attempt to outlaw the party of Muhammad Mi'ari. After long court debates, the party—which, to say the least, is certainly not a Zionist one—was recognized as legitimate. The Islamic Movement was set up on the basis of its public declarations, which are legal, and should not be outlawed.

[Talmor] What ideas are being entertained in the government in view of the fact that the murderers [of the soldiers on 14 February] came from that movement?

[Magen] We must first condemn this act, and the leadership of the Israeli Arabs did. It was a group of mad murderers. We must not draw conclusions about an entire community based on acts of individuals. The murder was an irregularity that should be dealt with immediately. Every action to prevent the recurrences of such an incident must be taken. We must learn the issues, perhaps even expand our supervision of what is taking place in religious institutions, and perhaps even take a closer look at what is being said in the sermons and prevent sermons that contain incitement. Still, there is a long way between such actions and reassessing political spectrums and deciding on the legality of any particular party. The Islamic Movement is known for its extremist stands. It is walking along the border, but has not yet crossed it in its declarations or declared goals. That is how it should be treated at this stage.

[Talmor] Are you not worried by the expanding influence of Islamic extremism in Israel, by the increasing number of Israeli Arabs who fall under its influence?

[Magen] As one who deals with the issue of Israeli Arabs and follows the various movements, I can tell you that that movement's expansion has stopped; it is not expanding further. It does have major centers in Kafr Kanna, Umm-al-Fahm, Kafr Qasim, and Rahat. There some 70 additional active cells in other locations. I see no expansion by that movement. In some parts of the Arab street, you can actually hear disappointment. There were big expectations that the movement would help out the Arab sector. It took over some of the urban municipalities, but, as they say, it did not deliver the goods. There is no need to worry that this movement might expand. Its strength and power must not be disregarded, but we must remember that no matter how extreme it may be, it is still on the border and has not yet crossed it.

[Talmor] What can you tell the Israeli Jewish resident? So far we have feared the Arabs from the territories following stabbing incidents in our streets. Should we now fear the Israeli Arabs who live among us?

[Magen] What I am about to say may not be too popular, especially in these days of pain: The Israeli Arabs are basically loyal to the State of Israel. There are marginal groups. The Gal'ed murderers belonged to a marginal group that was under the influence of extreme elements inside the Islamic Movement. We must not do anything to affect an entire community because of the acts of individuals. Such groups must be eliminated. They must be determinedly dealt with to the full extent of the law. However, we must not condemn the entire Israeli Arab population, which is trying to fulfill its duties and become a part of our society. I believe that over the past several years, we have made significant progress toward the long-desired integration of Jews and Arabs in the State of Israel.

[Talmor] Minister David Magen, thank you very much.

[Magen] Thank you and a good Sabbath.

Hammer Wins National Religious Party Leadership

TA1003061192 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English
0500 GMT 10 Mar 92

[Text] Education and Culture Minister Zvulun Hammer will lead the National Religious Party's list in the coming Knesset elections. The party's Central Committee ranked the list last night, preferring Hammer over Religious Affairs Minister Avner Sciaki in the No. 1 spot. Sciaki is No. 2 on the list, followed by Yig'al Bibi, Yitzhaq Levi, Hanan Porat, and Sha'ul Yahalom.

[Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 10 March in a page A1 report by Ilan Shahar says that Hammer "won a majority of 57 percent compared with 39 percent for his rival, Sciaki."]

Reporter Neil Sandler this morning asked the new leader of the party, Zvulun Hammer, about the party's slate:

[Begin recording] [Hammer] I believe that they represent the real attitude and approach of the National Religious Party toward many issues: I mean about religious Zionism, about the cooperation with the state, the attitude to all the people of Israel, and so on.

One of the things that we shall discuss now will be our approach and our plan to peace. We want peace; we want to participate in the peace process and we shall find our way in this process. I believe that we shall suggest a few suggestions about the way that we have to go on with the process. I mean, we don't want to cease, to stop the process that has begun, but we want to do things that will

not endanger the life of the people who are living now in Judea, Samaria, and the Strip of Gaza, and we don't want to do something that will be a core to a Palestinian state, but we want very much that the peace process will go on, and we shall contribute to it.

[Sandler] Do you think that this will lead to a change, possibly now that you have been elected as party head again, in the new opposition in the party to autonomy?

[Hammer] I believe that we shall create a definition that will bring real ways of coping and grappling with this problem of the peace, and we shall define our definition to it in the next days. [end recording]

Knesset Approves Left-Wing Merger, New Name

TA0903200392 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1700 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] The Knesset House Committee has given its approval to the merger of the CRM [Citizens Rights Movement], MAPAM [United Workers Party], and Shinuy Knesset factions into a single faction to be called: MERETZ Democratic Israel. Shinuy Movement Chairman Amnon Rubinstein announced that the joint list will stress the name MERETZ, while the name Democratic Israel will appear only in contexts that include the names of the three individual factions.

The new list decided that its election slogan will be: The strength to make the change [hako'ah la'asot et hashinuy]. This follows the Shinuy movement's demand that its name be part of the election slogan.

Report on King's Plan To Rule Iraq Dismissed*JN0903191992 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic
1700 GMT 9 Mar 92*

[Text] Jordanian political circles in Amman scoffed at the report in THE OBSERVER newspaper yesterday on the possibility that King Husayn might assume power in Iraq within the framework of a confederation between the two countries following Saddam Husayn's downfall.

[Begin Randah Habib's recorded dispatch from Amman] The paper published a frontpage article yesterday saying that King Husayn leaves for Washington carrying with him an astonishing plan to seize power in Iraq in case Saddam Husayn is toppled.

The Jordanian political circles said that this article, which coincides with the beginning of the Jordanian king's tour which will lead him to Washington, seeks to create confusion in the region and to sow sedition among the Arab countries and undermine confidence among them.

A ranking official has told our radio that the Jordanian monarch does not impose himself on any people. He said that the establishment of any confederation requires a popular referendum in the two countries similar to what will be the case in the proposed confederation between Jordan and Palestine.

The official said the content of the article conflicts with Jordan's policy, which opposes any interference in the affairs of others. The Kingdom always has raised the slogan of noninterference in Iraq's domestic affairs. [end recording]

Columnist Sees Need for New Iraqi Strategy*JN0703121392 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
7 Mar 92 p 26*

["Spotlight" column by Tahir al-'Udwan: "Tariq 'Aziz and the Required Political Idiom"]

[Text] The visit by Tariq 'Aziz to the Security Council this week is an important event, not only in terms of the expected results with regard to the Council, but also in terms of its significance as a diplomatic and media offensive to break the barrier of the international blockade being imposed on Iraq.

Since the end of the war, the battle being waged by the Iraqis has needed a new political idiom that goes beyond the previous slogans of the "mother of battles" and the confrontation of "good and bad." The Iraqis must adopt

new slogans appropriate to the current stage, slogans which show that Iraq has a just cause against the continuing U.S.-Zionist aggressive approach, on the one hand, and against the unjust, foul blockade on the other.

Iraq is in need of one new political idiom for Arab circles and another for the international arena. The first must show that the objectives of destroying Iraq's military and economic power—objectives that have nothing to do with the Gulf war and the (occupation of Kuwait)—seek to destroy the foundations of Arab power and to consecrate weakness, capitulation, and the colonialist-Zionist plundering of land and wealth to serve Greater Israel and U.S. oil companies.

The second political idiom is addressed to the international arena. Therefore, it should adopt a policy that will transform the lifting of the blockade into a just humanitarian cause. This depends on the ability of the Iraqi political and media idioms to present themselves and to show that their just cause is, in the first place, humanitarian. There are many champions of humanitarian issues in Europe and the United States.

The absence of an efficient Iraqi political idiom has even brought about the defeat of (Arab nationalists and intellectuals) in the face of U.S. political idiom that uses the issue of democracy in Iraq as a smokescreen to maintain the blockade and to press ahead with an international policy aimed at interfering in Iraq's domestic affairs. Such people have, wittingly or not, served Bush's declared policy to topple the Iraqi president, given that they have not bothered to examine the various aspects of this campaign and its dangerous (short- and long-term) objectives with regard to a pan-Arab future and issues, nor have they carefully scrutinized the false U.S. slogans. Had Churchill been Iraq's ruler under the current circumstances of a continuing blockade and aggression, he would have put aside all principles of democracy and leveled accusations at all its advocates.

Why should democracy and political pluralism in Iraq not be contingent on creating a climate that ensures that they will be born free and sound? This will happen only when the blockade is lifted, the causes of aggression removed, and its continuing manifestations stopped.

This is just one of a series of questions that might constitute the correct approach to a new Iraqi political idiom, one that employs a new and clear accent and phrases that have a clear meaning for the political realm and the media. In this way Iraq will be able to face the fierce imperialist-Zionist onslaught that seeks to destroy this nation and throw it hundreds of years backward by destroying it and the bases for its very entity, structure, and pan-Arab stands.

Damascus Denies Connection With DPRK Ship

*JN0903190392 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic
1700 GMT 9 Mar 92*

[Hisham Milhim dispatch from Washington]

[Excerpts] The issue of the North Korean vessel on its way to Iran that the United States and Israel say is carrying Scud surface-to-surface missiles, which ultimately will reach Syria, continues to be in the limelight. The issue has assumed unusual proportions in view of the statements by government officials and the intentional leaks by intelligence services to bring pressure to bear on the countries concerned with stopping the shipment. [passage omitted]

Syrian diplomatic sources in Washington have denied that Syria has anything to do with this vessel. These sources told Radio Monte Carlo that Washington did not raise the issue with Damascus. The sources said that Syria is being subjected to a campaign by Israel and its supporters in the United States to counter the U.S. criticism leveled at Israel in view of its settlement policy in the occupied Arab territories.

The Syrian sources criticized what they described as the double standards that Washington uses in its approach to the issue of arming countries in the region. While the United States provides Israel with the most sophisticated types of missiles in spite of Israel's superiority in this field, Washington works to prevent the Arab countries from obtaining weapons to defend themselves. [passage omitted]

Damascus Ba'th Party Branch Rally Marks 8 Mar

*JN0803191592 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio
Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 8 Mar 92*

[Excerpt] At noon today, the Damascus branch command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party staged a speech rally to mark the 29th anniversary of the glorious 8 March Revolution at the 7 April Hall at the branch premises. The rally was attended by some members of the Central Command of the National Progressive Front [NPF], Cabinet ministers, the comrade secretary and comrade members of the Damascus branch of the party, the governor of Damascus, members of the branch command of the NPF, heads and members of commands

of popular organizations and trade unions, along with a large number of the public. The event began with the observation of a minute's silence in honor of the souls of the martyrs of the Arab nation. Then the Ba'th Party anthem was sung.

The party branch secretary comrade Dr. 'Ala'-al-Din 'Abdin then delivered the speech, in which he emphasized that the 8 March Ba'th Party revolution marked a significant turning point and a crucial, historic milestone in the lives of Syria, our masses, and the Arab nation. The 8 March revolution erased the disgrace of secession, [reference to the 1961 breakup of the United Arab Republic] and took off in firm steps to pursue its goals of unity, development, and liberation. It now stands as a lofty, solid, deep-rooted structure as secure as the mountains, the main preoccupation and vehicle of which are the masses, and now has an even more solid foundation, with masses rallying behind the historic leadership of comrade struggler Hafiz al-Asad.

Comrade 'Abdin noted that our commemoration of the revolution coincides with our people's renewed pledge to President al-Asad, so that we pursue Syria's militant and developmental march and defend the fateful issues of the nation. [passage omitted]

AL-BA'TH Reacts to Shamir Statements on Begin

*JN1003090792 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio
Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 10 Mar 92*

[From the press review]

[Text] The newspaper AL-BA'TH has once again highlighted the intransigent Israeli rejection of international resolutions. It points to Shamir's statements that peace is an Israeli characteristic because, from his viewpoint, the Arabs do not deserve it. Under the headline "World Peace and Security Do Not Concern the Zionists," AL-BA'TH says: What draws attention is that Shamir's claims were made while he eulogized his predecessor, terrorist Menahem Begin. Shamir, however, has forgotten that Begin drowned in the mud of south Lebanon.

AL-BA'TH adds: Let Shamir say whatever he wants, and let Sharon rant with all the grudges and rancor hidden in his heart. We are confident that Arab land will be Arab land.

Bangladesh

Delayed Return of Burmans May Prompt UN Appeal

BK0503131492 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 5 Mar 92

[Text] Bangladesh is to take the Myanmar [Burma] refugee issue to the international fora if Yangon [Rangoon] delays a repatriation of its nationals. This was stated by Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman while talking to newsmen in Cox's Bazar Wednesday, [4 March] after visiting the (Diswa Falang) refugee camp. Mr. Mustafizur Rahman said Bangladesh still believed that the problem arising out of the influx of refugees could be solved across the table. He reiterated that we want to maintain friendly relations with neighbors. The foreign minister said Bangladesh demonstrated restraint and patience in face of Myanmar's provocations and this was acclaimed in the comity of nations. Mr. Rahman noted with satisfaction that the friendly countries across the world have responded to the call of the Rohingya refugees. He said the pressure of refugees [words indistinct] by cyclones and tidal bores has indeed caused a serious economic problem for Bangladesh.

'Door Open' to Dialogue

BK0703160592 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 7 Mar 92

[Text] Bangladesh is considering to approach the UN Security Council to take up the Burmese refugee issue. Foreign Office sources said in Dhaka today necessary instruction have been issued to the country's mission in New York to the do the needful in this respect. The problem, described as one of the greatest crises in history, needs a strong and extensive international support for its earlier resolution. According to official estimates more than 100,000 Burmese Muslims being evicted from their homes have crossed into Bangladesh. Unofficial count, however, has put the figure at more than 150,000. The Burmese authorities did not respond positively to Bangladesh's repeated initiative to settle the problem peacefully and bilaterally. Foreign Office sources, however, said Dhaka has kept its door open for a dialogue to settle the issue amicably.

Refugee Lists Given to Burma

BK0903162092 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] Bangladesh Government today handed over a list of 9,833 Myanmar [Burmese] refugees in Bangladesh to the Myanmar Embassy in Dhaka. A Foreign Office spokesman said this is the fifth list of the refugees submitted to the Myanmar Embassy. The government has so far forwarded list of 23,258 refugees in five installments to the Myanmar mission. The lists were given to start quick repatriation of the refugees as agreed by the two countries during Foreign Minister Mustafizur

Rahman's visit to Myanmar in November last. The embassy will be provided with the list of more refugees soon, the sources said.

India

Delhi Negative on Nuclear Treaty, Conference

BK1003074692 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 10 Mar 92

[Text] India has told the United States that it is willing for continued bilateral talks on nonproliferation. But it will not sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, nor attend any five-nation conference. This was conveyed by the foreign secretary, Mr. J.N. Dixit, during his talks with the U.S. State Department officials yesterday. He said the idea of further bilateral talks will be to see how India and the United States can advance the cause of nonproliferation.

Talking to Indian correspondents in Washington, Mr. Dixit said the U.S. officials accepted his proposal that they should make some suggestions for India's consideration. On the five-nation conference, he asserted that India will not participate in it.

Envoy To Probe Pentagon Paper on Nuclear 'Race'

BK0903091092 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] India has asked its ambassador in the United States to obtain all details about the alleged Pentagon document which purported to have called for the use of force to prevent further development of nuclear arms race in the Indian subcontinent. Responding to the grave concern expressed by members in the Lok Sabha over the report, the defense minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, said there is no authentic information with the government about the news item published in a section of the press today. He said the foreign secretary, Mr. J.N. Dixit, has gone to the United States and may collect authentic information. The defense minister said if necessary he will come before the house again after getting details about the report.

Earlier, raising the matter during Zero Hour, Mr. Saifuddin Chowdhury, CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist], and other opposition members took strong exception to the United States threatening the country's sovereignty. The speaker, Mr. Shivraj Patil, while appreciating the vigilance shown by members about matters concerning the country's security, cautioned them to be careful in raising such issues as they do not have access to verified facts.

Rao Confident of Surviving No-Confidence Motion

BK0703162392 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 7 Mar 92

[Text] The prime minister has expressed confidence that his government would survive the move to defeat it on

the floor of parliament despite being short of majority by six members. Speaking to newsmen in Nagpur today, Mr. Narasimha Rao said he is not worried and is confident that the government would survive. Asked about his reported threat to recommend dissolution of parliament in the event of government's defeat, he said it is only meant to drive home the point that all party members should be present and vote to full strength as the threat (of) defeat was serious.

Earlier, addressing a series of meetings in Nagpur, the prime minister asked the critics of the new economic policy to come up with an alternative package. Mr. Rao asserted that the new policy will take the country in the right direction.

The Congress-I leader, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad, also said that his party is sure to defeat the cut motion moved by the opposition to the president's address in parliament. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi, he said the performance of the Narasimha Rao government has been hailed all over, but it is unfortunate that the opposition, instead of supporting the progressive policies of the government, has chosen to bring it down. Mr. Azad said the Congress-I does not want frequent elections because of the heavy expenditure involved but the party will not shy away if election is forced on it.

The leader of the opposition, Mr. L.K. Advani, has said it will not be easy to defeat the Narasimha Rao government on the floor of the house. Addressing a meeting in Ahmedabad, he said the government appears to have the support of more MP's than the combined opposition. Mr. Advani said the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] will press for amendments on the motion of thanks on the basis of micro analysis of the government's performance. However, Mr. Advani said the present government was better than the earlier Congress government as it has decontrolled and deregularized the economy.

The Janata Dal leader, Mr. V.P. Singh says the National Front and the left parties are mobilizing all support for Monday's vote in the Lok Sabha against the motion of thanks to the president's address. Mr. Singh told newsmen in New Delhi that he had already spoken to Mr. N.T. Rama Rao who had asked all Telugu Desam MP's to vote against the motion. Some Janata Dal leaders have gone to Bihar to enlist the support of the Jharkand Mukti Morcha MP's. Mr. Singh said a whip has been issued to all members of the Front and action will be taken if anyone violates. Replying to a question, he said the front will ask the speaker to club the amendment moved by the National Front and BJP MP's on similar issues like unemployment and the price rise. However, he categorically ruled out a new flow of coordination with the BJP and said the question is about the issues involved and not which party moved the amendments.

Defends Economic Reforms

BK0903125692 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 1230 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, today categorically refuted the Opposition charge that the country's economic sovereignty was being compromised. In a spirited reply to the resumed discussion in the Lok Sabha on the motion of thanks to the president's address, he regretted that a panic sought to be created about international financial institutions is not in the interest of the country. He declared that World Bank belongs to India as much as the UN belongs to India. Mr. Rao said any financial institution will lay some conditions for lending and describing the acceptance of this as a surrender of the country's sovereignty is not acceptable.

Recalling the dire situation faced by the country, the prime minister said the government was left with no other option but to seek assistance from the IMF and the World bank to resolve the balance of payments crisis.

Reports of the prime minister's speech is still pouring in.

Wins Parliamentary Vote

BK0903134692 Delhi All India Radio Network
in Hindi 1330 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] Narasimha Rao Government has been successful in the trial of strength in the Lok Sabha. In a division on the Opposition's amendments to the motion of thanks to the president for his address to the joint session of parliament, the government won by 52 votes. The opposition could muster only 210 votes in favor of the Bharatiya Janata Party's proposed amendments, while the Congress-I and its allied parties secured a total of 262 votes. Five members did not take part in the voting, while 55 members, including the former prime minister Chandra Shekhar, were absent from the house. The Bharatiya Janata Party had proposed amendments on the issues relating to unemployment and price rise.

Lok Sabha Vote, Rao Address Detailed

BK0903163192 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 1530 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] The Narasimha Rao government today won the first major trial of strength in the Lok Sabha convincingly defeating all opposition amendments to the motion of thanks on the president's address. The first amendment moved by the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] on the price rise and unemployment was rejected by the house by 52 votes. Two hundred and sixty-two members voted against, while 210 voted for the amendments, with five abstentions. Fifty-four members, including the former prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, were absent. [Janata Dal dissident leader] Mr. Ajit Singh was present. Three other amendments moved by left parties were put to division separately and rejected by the house. These related to right to work, IMF conditionalities, and compromise on economic sovereignty. The BJP did not vote

on the amendments moved by the left parties. There were in all 96 amendments. The house later approved the motion of thanks on the president's address by a voice vote.

Earlier, in a spirited reply to the four-day debate, the prime minister refuted the opposition charge that the country's economic sovereignty has been compromised. He regretted that the opinion sought to be created about the international financial institutions is not in the interest of the country. He said the government had gone into the minutest detail before the new economic program was adopted. Whatever alternatives were available were discussed and the most suited program was chosen.

Mr. Narasimha Rao declared that he is willing to have a full debate on the issue and make available all relevant records to the chair for authentication of the government's claim. He said he has been seeking national consensus on all major problems facing the country and consensus was generally available.

Mr. Rao said the new economic program has the support of the vast majority. He said the country was in a very bad economic situation and even the V.P. Singh and the Chandra Shekhar governments had gone in for international assistance. It is nothing unusual what his government is doing by going to the IMF and the World Bank for assistance. He said any lending institution will always lay some conditions and accepting these should not be construed as a surrender of the country's economic sovereignty. Mr. Rao categorically denied that other political parties were not consulted before bringing in these reforms.

During his hour-long reply, the prime minister said poverty and unemployment are uppermost in the mind of the government. Referring to the employment generation, the prime minister said nearly 800 crore rupees more will be available for the purpose during the next financial year to create about 90 lakh jobs. About the revamped public distribution system, Mr. Narasimha said it has been framed to help the poor and the weaker sections. The prime minister announced that the Minorities Commission will be given the statutory status. He said the government wants to do it during the current session of parliament.

On foreign relations, Mr. Narasimha Rao said any doubt that India has drifted away from its policy on Palestine by establishing diplomatic relations with Israel are unfounded. He assured the members that India's role is going to be very crucial in any future peace process in West Asia.

Earlier, participating in the debate, the former prime minister, Mr. V.P. Singh, in a hard-hitting speech said the country's economic and political sovereignty is at stake and the Dunkel proposals are being implemented without formally adopting them. He said poor sections are made to bear the burden of the structural reforms. In a speech punctuated with humor, the BJP leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, called for a code of conduct to be

observed during the debate on the president's address. He said the address should not be made an occasion for confrontation and democracy reduced to a mockery. He criticized the government for not making serious efforts to arrive at a consensus on crucial issues. He also pointed out that the exit policy is being contemplated without provision for social security.

The Congress-I has said the defeat of the opposition amendments on the motion of thanks for the president's address in the Lok Sabha clearly shows that the government enjoys the confidence of the house and its policies have full support of the people. Briefing newsmen in New Delhi this evening, the party spokesman, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad said if the attempt by a section of the opposition to pull down the government had succeeded, it would have harmed the country.

The Janata Dal vice president, Mr. Ramvilas Paswan, has claimed that today's vote is not a setback to the opposition as a majority of the 532-member house had not voted against the amendments. He said only 262 members have voted against. Mr. Paswan, however, admitted that some Janata Dal members had stayed away from the house and said that disciplinary action will be initiated against them.

Prime Minister Says Food Subsidy To Continue

BK1003132092 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 1230 GMT 10 Mar 92

[Text] The prime minister today announced that food subsidy will continue as long as necessary even though the World Bank wants us to do away with it. Replying to the week-long debate in the Rajya Sabha on the motion of thanks to the president's address, Mr. Narasimha Rao asserted that the government is implementing several poverty alleviation programs. The house adopted the motion with 111 votes in favor and 20 against after rejecting all the amendments which were either voted on or withdrawn.

During his one-hour-long reply, the prime minister dwelt at length on the opposition criticism of the government's economic policies. He said the government has accepted only those conditions of the World Bank which do not erode the country's sovereignty. Recalling the circumstances under which the structural adjustment loans were sought, Mr. Narasimha Rao said it was absolutely necessary to maintain our creditworthiness. He pointed out that what his government has done is only a continuation of the process initiated in 1990 by the previous governments. Mr. Rao appealed to the opposition not to adopt a confrontationist approach and urged them to become partners in the task of restructuring the economy.

When the motion was taken up for adoption, the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] leader, Mr. Samar Mukherjee, insisted on a division, saying his party wants to register its protest against the government's economic policies.

The final voting pattern in the Lok Sabha yesterday on the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] amendment to the motion of thanks on the president's address shows that while 231 members, including those of BJP, National Front and left parties, voted for the amendment, 269 members of the Congress-I and its allies voted against. The final voting pattern clearly establishes that the Congress-I, which has 242 members in the house having an effective strength of 532, was able to muster two votes more than is necessary for an absolute majority.

The Telugu Desam parliamentary party leader, Mr. Vijayakumar Raju, says nine Lok Sabha members of the party did not participate in the voting on the motion of thanks yesterday as they did not want to pull down the government. Mr. Raju said in New Delhi today that he came to parliament house but could not vote on the motion against his conscience.

Finance Minister: More Economic Loans Needed

BK0803090692 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 0830 GMT 8 Mar 92

[Text] The finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, says India is likely to get an additional \$3,000 million from the International Monetary Fund and other agencies. In an interview to the PTI [PRESS TRUST OF INDIA] in New Delhi, Mr. Singh said the additional loan is necessary for further restructuring the economy. He said the country would need a net amount of \$6,000 million from financial institutions to make up for the current deficit which was around \$5,000 million in 1991. Dr. Manmohan Singh said the interim committee of the IMF will be meeting in Washington in April this year. He denied that there were strings attached to the loan by the financial institutions. He said despite problems, the government was able to tie up arrangements with the IMF and the World Bank and it is unfair to say that such arrangements are detrimental to national interests.

Radio Kashmir Assistant Director Abducted

BK0703125092 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 1230 GMT 7 Mar 92

[Text] Mr. G.H. Zia, Assistant Station Director of Radio Kashmir, was kidnapped by militants from Chanakpura area of Srinagar around noon today. Mr. Zia was returning along with the staff members of the station after paying condolences on the death of a family member of a colleague. The rest of the employees were allowed to go.

Srinagar Deputy Commissioner Kidnapped

BK0603160792 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 1530 GMT 6 Mar 92

[Text] In the Kashmir Valley, the militants today kidnapped the additional deputy commissioner of Srinagar, Mr. Mohammad Amin Beg, from the premises of the

Hazratbal shrine. Mr. Beg had gone to the shrine to offer prayers. He was abducted by armed militants soon after he had offered the prayers.

In Agre Kalan village of Baramula District, people took out a procession protesting against the activities of the militants. They complained that the militants had teased some womenfolk.

Kashmir Releases 21 Arrested on Militancy Charges

BK0603033292 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 0245 GMT 6 Mar 92

[Text] The Jammu and Kashmir government has ordered the release of 21 persons arrested in connection with militant activities. This follows the recommendation of the state level screening committee which held its meeting in Jammu yesterday. The director general of state police, Mr. B.S. Bedi, said about 800 misguided youths have so far been released on the recommendation of screening committee.

Opposition Divided on Tibetan Human Rights Issue

BK0603111292 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 0930 GMT 6 Mar 92

[Text] The Lok Sabha today witnessed a sharp division among the opposition over the issue of human rights violations in Tibet. The Janata Dal and BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] members criticized the government for voting with China and Pakistan in the UN Human Rights Commission on the issue, while left parties complimented it for the stand it had taken. Raising the issue during zero hour, Mr. George Fernandes, Janata Dal, and leader of the opposition, Mr. L.K. Advani, said India should have supported the Tibetan community. Mr. Advani said, at the most, India should have abstained from voting on the resolution which criticized China for violation of human rights in Tibet if it did not go in to support it. The left parties, however, described the resolution as an attempt by imperialists to exploit underdeveloped countries through neocolonialism and interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign nation. They said India will never allow interference by anybody on the pretext of human rights violation in Jammu and Kashmir or Punjab.

Iran

President Chairs Security Council Session

LD0703204692 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic
of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT
7 Mar 92

[Text] The Supreme National Security Council held a session on Saturday evening. The session was chaired by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, and attended by members, political advisers, and the country's senior military commanders.

UN Human Rights Report Termed 'Political'*LD0903134992 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 9 Mar 92*

[Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Mottaki, in an interview with reporters this morning said that this year's resolution of the UN Human Rights Commission is political. He added that the efforts of the West, particularly the United States, to mobilize other countries against the Islamic Republic of Iran have not been successful.

According to our correspondent, the deputy foreign minister added: The strong and active presence of our country's delegation at this session and the appointment of [Iran's representative in Geneva Sirus Naseri] the deputy head of the UN Human Rights Commission angered America and some Western countries. The Americans, who were exerting a lot of pressure on the commission, were not pleased to see that world public opinion toward Iran is rectified. They, therefore, began to exert their influence.

On the report of the Commission's envoy [Galindo Pohl], Mr. Mottaki said: The content of this report is not compatible with its conclusion; and it seems that the U.S. pressure against Galindo Pohl has had some effect. This claim is proved by the remarks made by U.S. officials.

Mr. Mottaki described as weak the concluding resolution of the UN Human Rights Commission and said: My evaluation of the working process on the whole was positive; and during this session we succeeded in presenting to the world a more realistic picture of our country with respect to human rights issues.

In conclusion of this interview, referring to the signing of a new agreement between Iran, Iraq and the International Red Cross on the release of the remaining POW's and investigation of the fate of the MIA's, Mr. Mottaki expressed the hope that the work of repatriating a number of the remaining Iranian POW's in Iraq would be completed before the end of this year [20 March 1992].

Mottaki Alleges U.S. Pressure*LD0903162192 Tehran IRNA in English 1434 GMT 9 Mar 92*

[Text] Tehran, March 9, IRNA—A senior Iranian official on Monday took to task the United Nations human rights envoy Reynaldo Galindo Pohl for failing to do justice to the status of human rights in the Islamic Republic under Washington's political pressure.

"The publishing of Galindo Pohl's report after a two-week delay and after the American State Department's report on the situation of human rights in Iran indicates he has been under the United States pressure," Manouchehr Mottaki, deputy foreign minister for international affairs told a press conference.

Some of the phrases and sentences used in the U.S. State Department's report have been copied blindly in the conclusion of Galindo Pohl's report, and the subsequent statements by American officials unmask Washington's active role in getting those expressions included in the U.N. Report, he noted.

"Disagreement among the U.N. Human Rights Commission members to vote for a resolution against the Islamic Republic gives a good lesson to the West," Mottaki said.

He pointed that of the 53 member Human Rights Commission "only 22 members" cast their votes for the resolution, which he described among "the weakest" issued by the commission in the past 8 years.

The deputy foreign minister, voicing Iran's opposition to mixing of political issues with human rights, said the Islamic Republic and many other independent countries of the world were trying to counter such biased political approaches.

"Over the past few years," continued Mottaki "Iran has managed to prove false allegations ranging from mass executions, executions without trial, torture practice in prisons and so on before the U.N. envoys and the Human Rights Commission."

He quoted Galindo Pohl as admitting in parts of his report that no (political) inmate has ever been executed in Iran under pretext of being a drug smuggler.

The Foreign Ministry will do its best to present the realities of the Islamic Revolution and the republic better than ever before, while maintaining its revolutionary principles and values, concluded Mottaki.

Iranian POW's 'Still in Iraq'*LD0903141592 Tehran IRNA in English 0939 GMT 9 Mar 92*

[Text] Tehran, March 9, IRNA—More Iranian war prisoners [POW's] are expected to reunite with their family members by "Nowruz", Iranian new year, March 21.

Deputy Foreign Minister in Charge of International Affairs Manouchehr Mottaki quoting the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC], made the remark here Monday adding that Baghdad has admitted more Iranian prisoners are still in Iraq.

Speaking to reporters Mottaki said the ICRC has based its report on information received from the Iraqi officials.

Mottaki expressed hope that more Iranian POW's, captured in the course of the 1980-88 Iraq-Iran war, will arrive home by Nowruz.

Release of the new batch of the POW's follows an agreement reached in a session of the technical committee of Iranian, Iraqi and ICRC representatives in Geneva two weeks ago.

According to the agreement, Tehran and Baghdad have undertaken to release the remaining POW's and provide information on whereabouts of those listed as missing in action, whose names have been forwarded to the ICRC, he added.

Mottaki said that there is still no list available on exact number of Iranian POW's remaining in Iraq.

Maleki Views Tehran's Role in Regional Affairs

NC1003083692 Tehran SORUSH in Persian
29 Feb-6 Mar 92 pp 6-9

[Interview with Deputy Foreign Minister 'Abbas Maleki by SORUSH correspondent Kiumars Maleki in Tehran; date not given; first two paragraphs are introduction: "New Circumstances and National Interests—Four Main Factors for Relations With Nations"]

[Excerpts] In view of the special political situation imposed on us, for years our country was in a state of forced isolation and was missing political and economic opportunities. The expansion of our foreign policy, which should have benefited our economic interests, became an end in itself and our economy became secondary.

In other words, for many years our economic interests were sacrificed for our political interests, and our political interests could not be translated into any economic benefits. [passage omitted]

[SORUSH] What is the most important problem that faces the ECO, the Economic Cooperation Organization, at present, and what is the outcome of the current session until now?

[Maleki] The fundamental problem facing the ECO in the past was the difficulty the member countries had in properly prioritizing problems which were of greater importance to them. For example, the ECO member countries are also members of other organizations. Pakistan is a member of the Commonwealth [as published], SAARC [South Asian Association of Regional Countries], and is involved in its own problems such as those with India. Turkey has its eyes focused on membership in the EC for economic reasons and militarily it belongs to NATO. Similarly, the events that took place in the former Soviet Union and during the Persian Gulf war had a great impact on the trend of ECO activities. [passage omitted]

[SORUSH] In the past few weeks the Western media has been carrying extensive propaganda about the newly independent Central Asian republics leaning more toward Turkey and, on the pretext of the Istanbul session, they are playing up the idea of the Black Sea common market. What is your opinion on this? Since most of these republics participate in that economic pact, and if the Black Sea treaty materializes, how do you view it in relation to the ECO?

[Maleki] What is being disseminated by the West has not been confirmed and if we wish to discover the leanings of the newly independent republics, it is best if we speak to them and find out their opinion.

The policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is not to enter into rivalry and competition with other countries over the newly independent republics. Our country has historical, and naturally far more deep-rooted, ties with them. Even before the dissolution of the Soviet Union the people in these countries were leaning toward Iran, and we witnessed how many were killed in the past few years trying to reach Iran. They used to throw themselves in the Aras river and clash with border guards in order to come to Iran.

If you visit Tajikistan you will see how the people welcome Iranians; it is hardly comparable to how they greet people of other countries. All this is naturally due to the centuries-old ties of common culture and religion with this region we have always termed "across the river" or "Greater Khorasan."

Only a few minutes [as published] are left until the Caspian Sea session is scheduled to begin in which Russia, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Iran are members. The Black Sea is also a similar organization comprised of countries which are within geographical limits. In every economic organization, one or some of the countries should play a more active and dynamic role. In my opinion, useful results can come from discussions between officials of Iran and Russia at the Caspian Sea organization session. In fact, the members of such organizations should complement one another, and this is possible. We do not see ourselves indulging in any form of rivalry and we will merely do what we should.

[SORUSH] As you mentioned, the newly independent republics have greater cultural leanings and links with us. How well can these links be translated into economic ties? To what extent can Western propaganda stressing their common linguistic bond with Turkey be effective? Since we have common borders with most of the Central Asian republics, what is your opinion on the issues I have mentioned?

[Maleki] [passage omitted] In countries such as Afghanistan and Tajikistan the real language spoken by all is Persian. We see roots of this language in all the republics and Persian has its own special place in them. In Samarkand and Bokhara the people speak Persian and the language spoken in Ashkhabad contains numerous Persian words.

It is true that Turkish is spoken in Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan, but the Turkish spoken in these republics is vastly different from Istanbul Turkish. Much work has also been done with the Turkish language in our country. Poetry has been written in this language. [passage omitted]

During the Iran-Iraq war, and subsequently in the crisis resulting from the Kuwaiti crisis, the Turkish Government shrewdly and alertly seized the initiative by capitalizing on the prevailing political situation for economic purposes. The foreign ministers and deputy foreign ministers of six of the former Soviet republics and two countries on the West of the Black Sea, as well as Turkey, met in Istanbul to discuss preliminaries for the Black Sea pact. This session was held just before the ECO session in Tehran. The Western mass media disseminated extensive propaganda favoring these actions by the Turkish leaders, stressing the Turkish Government's role in the future regional politico-economic equilibrium and highlighting the fact that, except for Tajikistan, all the Muslim Central Asian republics converse in Turkish and have greater leanings toward Turkey. In practice, we know that Istanbul Turkish does not even resemble the languages of the Central Asian republics and can not even be understood by them.

Regardless of the Western propaganda our political officials are sensitively and vigilantly following all diplomatic moves in the region and are attaching immense importance to Turkey's actions regarding the preliminaries for establishing the Black Sea organization. [passage omitted] Eight of the nine countries participating in the session in Turkey were under communist rule until the end of the eighties, which confirms the importance of Ankara's initiative. In the view of observers, such an initiative could not have been successful without the green light, support, and guidance of the United States. Those present include representatives from Greece, which has longstanding territorial differences with Turkey, and some vestiges of the Yugoslav central government which are embroiled in civil war themselves. Both are far removed from the Black Sea and participated as observers. The republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan, which do not have any coastline on the Black Sea, participated as active founding members, while representatives of the Georgian Republic also participated. The conditions in the latter are still swathed in a haze of ambiguity regarding its political leadership and the fate of its president.

What is immensely important is that Armenia accepted the invitation of a host with which it has historical and deep-rooted animosity. The massacre of a few hundred thousand, or according to some, millions of Armenians has always cast a shadow on Turkish-Armenian relations, and a reciprocal hatred has reigned over them. All these factors bring into question the future of the Black Sea organization for economic cooperation, yet confirm the expertise and ambitious attitude of the Turkish leaders in bringing together heterogeneous elements, which gives this effort diplomatic importance.

The continued meetings of this nascent organization, which might come to be known as the "Group of Nine," could result in important political, economic, and security benefits.

It would be enough if we were to suppose this organization, in its embryonic stages, could play a positive and decisive role in reducing the differences between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, or in mitigating tension between Russia and Ukraine on military issues. There is no doubt that such success, in an era of eliminating crises and tension, would make the organization immensely popular, reaping major benefits for Turkey. [passage omitted]

The question that arises here is: Will our diplomacy also be able to reap any benefits from the new circumstances? In view of the deep historical and cultural bonds between Iran and the republics on both sides of the Caspian Sea, if the countries on the southern coast of the Persian Gulf and the Black Sea seize the opportunities which should be ours, will we have a suitable answer for our society—today and for posterity?

At this point in history, when events are occurring with unimaginable rapidity, do our foreign policy and diplomacy have the speed to match?

Iran's success in convening in Tehran the immensely important session in the history of the RCD [Regional Cooperation for Development], the forerunner of the ECO, proves that the political officials of our country are keeping the importance of such regional cooperation pacts in mind, and by playing an active and leading role in regional diplomacy they have accounted for reaping benefits from the new circumstances in their strategy for the protection of national interests. In any case, all should remain alert so that opportunities do not slip out of our hands.

Oil Output Cut in Line With OPEC Decision

LD0703172592 Tehran IRNA in English 0956 GMT
7 Mar 92

[Text] Tehran, March 7, IRNA—Iran has reduced her oil output to 3.184 million barrels per day (mbd) as of March 1st this year, a statement by the Oil Ministry said here Saturday. The decision has been made in light of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) final statement issued at the end of the 6th session of the Market Monitoring Ministerial Committee held in Geneva last month.

The Oil Ministry's decision will obviously reduce Iran's oil deliveries to the spot market, the statement said. However, it added that the move will not effect Iran's commitments to those parties with whom the Oil Ministry has concluded agreements. In a bid to stop further price falls, OPEC in its February session decided to reduce its production ceiling for March and April from 24.5 to 22.9 mbd.

Statements on Azerbaijan-Armenia Conflict Issued

Foreign Ministry Statement

LD1003123992 *Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 10 Mar 92*

[Text] In the wake of the intensification of the clashes between Azerbaijan and Armenia over the Karabakh issue, and in light of the need for a peaceful solution, the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran has issued a statement. While expressing regret and deep concern for the intensification of the clashes in the Karabakh region and the continuation of the Azerbaijan-Armenia disputes, which have caused tragic loss of life in recent days, the statement says: The Islamic Republic believes that the continuation of these clashes is not in the interest of either of the warring parties and will only inflict further losses and casualties on both nations and states. The Islamic Republic strongly condemns these clashes and their continuation and intensification, which are claiming the lives of more innocent human beings every day, and deems it necessary to continue efforts to find a solution to these disputes, particularly since the trend of events indicates the involvement of seditious foreign agents in these clashes.

The Islamic Republic, in accordance with its heartfelt desire to restore peace and tranquillity to the region, taking into account the interests of both Azerbaijan and Armenia, and in view of the formal request of the governments of these states for mediation, deems it a duty to continue its serious efforts to restore stability and tranquillity to the region and halt the war and bloodshed. In this connection, we hope that through the assistance and the sense of responsibility of the people and leaders of the two countries the dispute may be solved by political and peaceful means.

Velayati Letter to UN on Mediation

LD0903192192 *Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 9 Mar 92*

[Text] In a letter to the UN secretary general, Foreign Minister Velayati informed that organization about Iran's mediatory efforts to resolve the conflict between the republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Expressing concern about the spread of the clashes and the conflict becoming deep-rooted, he called on neighboring countries and big powers not to send arms to the two warring countries and on the United Nations to cooperate in the matter.

In the letter, recounting Iran's cooperation with the United Nations in the Persian Gulf crisis and the Afghan issue and her effective cooperation with various institutes of that organization, the foreign minister describes his mediatory efforts to resolve the Karabakh issue as further confirmation of Iran's desire to preserve peace and stability in the region and the world.

Referring to the fact that the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia is deep-rooted, the letter reads: The main danger now is the possibility of the matter becoming a general issue and for armed groups to be formed in both countries. This would cause more death and destruction, on the one hand, and make solutions more complicated, on the other.

The letter also states: The understanding of the peoples and leaders of the two republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia that the conflict should be resolved before it is turned into a general crisis is regarded as a ray of hope for resolving the issue. In accordance with its duty and to prevent a great human catastrophe, the letter reads, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has accepted the request of the Azeri and Armenian authorities to mediate in the issue.

Referring to the desire of the leaders of the two countries to resolve the conflict, the letter stresses: The Karabakh issue can be resolved, provided the existing grounds for its peaceful solution are preserved and the issues are regarded realistically and fairly.

Editorials Urge Tehran To Solve NKAO Conflict

'Duty' Toward Azerbaijan Seen

NC0803142792 *Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 2 Mar 92 pp 1, 2*

[Editorial: "The Massacre in Nagorno-Karabakh and Our Responsibility"]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.

The reports from Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast [NKAO] are extremely perturbing. In one attack by Armenian forces on the city of Khodzhalys more than 1,000 people were killed, nearly as many were wounded, and all the residents of the city had to take refuge in the mountains and wilderness. Another report says that Armenian forces attacked Shusha, the last stronghold in Nagorno-Karabakh, and the residents fled in fear. Extensive attacks by Armenian forces on Azerbaijani-inhabited regions in Nagorno-Karabakh continue in the form of tank and artillery shelling as well as missile attacks on cities...

The news reports do not pertain to the massacre of some idol-worshipping tribe in the depths of the African jungles, and even if they did it would be the responsibility of all mankind. This is a report on the massacre of Shiites in the region of the country of the Lord of Ages, the base of pure Muhammadan Islam. What was the reason for this massacre? A longstanding feud between the Armenians and the Azerbaijanis, which at the most can be attributed to geographical and border differences. Obviously the two sides had overtly and covertly drawn up their own versions of geographical maps and consider the entire world from east to west their own fortified domain.

Let us ignore these fantasies. The fact is that Armenian military forces commit atrocities against the Azerbaijanis every day. One day they down a helicopter, killing several people, on another they attack the homes of defenseless civilians, massacring the people and leaving them homeless. Do we not have any responsibility in the face of all these crimes?

The answer in our political circles may be that Iran is engaged in mediation and will continue its efforts to ensure peace and cordiality between the two republics. One cannot deny Iran's political efforts, but in conditions in which the Armenian Armed Forces do not show any inclination to abide by the promises given by their officials and in this fluid period when the power structure is taking shape in the various republics and is beyond the domain of Russia, a situation Armenia is using to bully Azerbaijan, should Iran's obligation be limited to this political effort? What is the meaning of the Hadith [prophet's sayings]: "He who hears the call asking Muslims to rise and does not respond is not a Muslim"? Where is Muslim honor? Who is supposed to halt all this bloodshed?

Should we merely content ourselves with our role as mediators and not heed reports of the massacre of more than 1,000 Muslims in our neighborhood and attach the necessary importance to them? Will the problem be solved if we flatter Westerners and ask them why they are silent on our mediation?

Who does not know that the covert hands of the United States and its cohorts are active behind the scenes in Nagorno-Karabakh? Iran should continue its political efforts but it also has some other obligations stemming from Muslim pride and honor in the face of the massacre of innocent Muslims. We should never forget this obligation.

At present, not only are we not acting on this obligation, but in most departments lower-ranking officials are treading a path that does not conform with the present reality. Simultaneous with the Armenian massacre of Muslims in Nagorno-Karabakh, we are hosting a number of Armenians in sports, art, and other fields. Of course this is not an expression of support but it can be misconstrued as such by our Muslim Azerbaijani brothers and sisters.

Iran should have relations with Armenia, but where is the need for this plethora of exchanges? Are our officials unaware of the negative political impact of such exchanges? Is it not possible that certain hands are involved seeking to create an adverse impression in the minds of the Azerbaijanis against Iran?

It is expected that Iranian officials will pay heed to the delicacy of the situation. They should assess all aspects of their attitudes and actions and the mind-set of lower-ranking officials and they should revamp policies. They should act in a way that allows Iran to correctly implement its religious and ideological responsibilities regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh issue.

'Favorable Opportunity' for Mediation

LD0803181892 Tehran IRNA in English 0826 GMT
8 Mar 92

[Text] Tehran, March 8, IRNA—The morning daily TEHRAN TIMES argued Sunday that the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict over Karabakh [Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast—NKA0] has been imposed on the region by past history and that the end result of the hostilities will only be to the benefit of the outside forces.

The daily's editorial noted that current movement by the Azeri "ultranationalists" which resulted in resignation of Ayaz Muttalibov, could not possibly solve all the country's problems.

The outburst of nationalistic sentiments among the Azeris could lead to two sets of problems: first, the call for revenge on the Armenians for their recent slaughter of the Azeris. "This will result in the intensification of the hostilities which will only drain the limited economic resources of the two countries and may eventually lead to widespread instability in the area and open the way for the interference of outside forces in the region."

Secondly, growth of nationalistic feelings among the Azeris will make it impossible for them to vote in a composed mental state in the coming elections. Election of a wise, efficient and self-possessed statesman as president is highly important for Azerbaijan, one who should be able to pull the country out of the present crisis and focus all his efforts on the restoration of peace in the region.

"To bring about peace between the two republics, Iran's mediation could be quite effective provided all aspects of the crisis are taken into consideration."

It concluded by saying that since both sides have demonstrated their readiness and goodwill in this connection, Iranian officials should do their best to take advantage of the favourable opportunity for the restoration of peace in the region.

Telecommunications Accord With Azerbaijan Signed

LD0803084292 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT
5 Mar 92

[Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran and Azerbaijan have signed an agreement to increase telecommunication lines between the two countries to 300 microwave channels.

Mr. Gharazi, the post, telegraph, and telephone minister, announced the news upon his return to Tehran this evening from the republic of Azerbaijan. He referred to the role of postal and telephone links in the expansion of economic ties between the two countries. He said: On the basis of the agreement signed between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan, the two countries will also establish fax links.

It has also been decided that postal packages will be cleared at the borders of the two countries in less than 24 hours.

\$80 Million Trade Deal Signed With Turkmenistan

LD0503214292 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 5 Mar 92

[Text] An agreement worth more than \$80 million was signed today by the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Turkmenistan in Mashhad.

According to the agreement signed by the deputy head of the Oppressed (Mostaz'afan) and the War Disabled (Janbazan) Foundation and the head of the Turkmenistan Foreign Committee, the Islamic Republic of Iran will import goods and raw materials required for her industry from Turkmenistan in return for sending 260,000 tons of foodstuffs. The time limit for the implementation of the agreement is set at three months.

The deputy head of the Turkmenistan Foreign Committee concluded his 4-day visit to Khorasan Province today. He announced the news in an interview before leaving Khorasan, adding that during his visit he concluded seven agreements and two memoranda of understanding in the fields of commerce, industry and transportation with the officials of the province.

Letter of Understanding Signed With Ukraine

LD1003103892 Tehran IRNA in English 0848 GMT 10 Mar 92

[Text] Moscow, March 10, IRNA—A letter of understanding on transportation cooperation between Iran and Ukraine was signed in the Ukrainian capital of Kiev Monday.

Iranian Deputy Minister of Roads and Transport Sa'ed Nejad who wound up a three-day visit to Kiev Tuesday morning signed the document on behalf of Iran.

According to the memorandum, Iran and Ukraine agreed to establish air, sea, road and railway connections between the two countries.

The two sides also agreed to exchange students to study navigation courses in Iran and Ukraine.

The memorandum also calls for feasibility studies on transit of Iranian goods to Europe and the pertaining technical and tariff issues.

Nejad who arrived in Kiev from Moscow also met with the Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister, Transportation Minister and other officials.

The Iranian delegation left Kiev for Tbilisi on a similar visit to Georgia. He will then proceed to Armenia.

Slovene Minister Arrives, Holds Economic Talks

LD0903140492 Tehran IRNA in English 1310 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] Tehran, March 9, IRNA—Slovenia's Deputy Prime Minister Andrej Ocvirk today briefed Iranian Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Mohsen Nurbakhsh on his country's economic situation.

Ocvirk who arrived here on Saturday at the head of a delegation to seek recognition for the former Yugoslav Republic, urged Iran to forge independent ties with Slovenia.

The two sides exchanged views on expansion of mutual economic relations, and agreed that Iranian and Slovenian experts would follow up talks in this regard.

Discusses Energy, Irrigation Projects

LD0903161692 Tehran IRNA in English 1445 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] Tehran, March 8, IRNA—Deputy Prime Minister of Slovenia Andrej Ocvirk announced his country's readiness here Monday to cooperate with Iran in the areas of dam construction, irrigation and energy generation projects.

He made the remarks in a meeting with deputy Energy Minister, Majid Qasemi, who welcomed collaboration with Slovenian companies in water and power projects.

Ocvirk arrived here last Saturday at the head of a delegation to seek Iran's recognition for the former Yugoslav Republic of Slovenia.

Republic of Slovenia Recognized

LD0903173692 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] In a memorandum of understanding signed by the deputy foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the deputy prime minister of Slovenia, the Islamic Republic of Iran officially recognized the newly-independent Slovenia.

Our correspondent reports:

[Unidentified correspondent] The Islamic Republic of Iran and the newly independent Republic of Slovenia, one of the former Republics of Yugoslavia, today signed a memorandum of understanding on the basis of which Iran officially recognized the independence of that Republic, and the two countries announced their agreement to establish diplomatic, economic, commercial, scientific, and cultural relations with each other.

This memorandum of understanding was signed between Mr. Andrej Ocvirk, deputy prime minister of Slovenia, and Mr. Mahmud Va'ez, the Islamic Republic of Iran's deputy minister of foreign affairs. At the time of signing these documents, the Slovene deputy prime

minster, in an interview with the reporter of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran, pointed to the separation of four Republics—that is, Slovenia, Macedonia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, from the Federation of Yugoslavia.

He said: Iran is the 50th country which has officially recognized the independence of Slovenia. He added, the Republic of Slovenia will establish political relations with every country that will recognize her officially; and it is prepared to pay its share of international credits and debts in a joint effort with the rest of the Republics.

In this same interview, the Islamic Republic of Iran's deputy foreign minister pointed to the industrial position of Slovenia and said: Thirty percent of the total bilateral trade of Iran and Yugoslavia was with the Republic of Slovenia. And during the Slovene deputy prime minister's visit to Tehran, talks were held on the cash purchase of 500,000 tonnes of oil; the establishment of flights between Tehran and Ljubljana, capital of Slovenia; the establishment of economic, commercial, and banking relations; and cooperation between private sectors and between the communications organizations and university establishments of the two countries.

Cypriot Foreign Minister Arrives on Visit

LD0903193192 Tehran IRNA in English 0628 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] Tehran, March 9, IRNA—Cypriot Foreign Minister Yeoryios Iakovou heading a political delegation arrived here Sunday night.

Iakovou is scheduled to discuss with his Iranian counterpart 'Ali Akbar Velayati Tehran-Nicosia relations, regional and international issues, the Non-Aligned Movement and other subjects of mutual interest.

Holds Talks With Velayati

LD0903193692 Tehran IRNA in English 1030 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] Tehran, March 9, IRNA—The visiting Cypriot Foreign Minister Yeoryios Iakovou and his Iranian counterpart 'Ali Akbar Velayati here Monday morning discussed bilateral relations, situation in the Mediterranean and the Balkans and the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Cypriot minister who arrived here Sunday night called for broadening of Tehran-Nicosia relations. He also briefed Velayati on the current situation in the Mediterranean and the Balkans and said that Cyprus welcomes increased cooperation on regional affairs and continued exchange of views on the Non-Aligned Movement.

Velayati said efforts for promotion of Tehran-Nicosia relations have been productive and added that there was no impediment on further consolidation of bilateral relations.

Meets With Hashemi-Rafsanjani

LD0903194192 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Excerpt] In a meeting with our country's president, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, today, Cypriot Foreign Minister Yeorgios Iakovou, expressed his gratitude to the Islamic Republic of Iran for its political and economic initiatives in the region, and called for the promotion of Irano-Cypriot cooperation in all areas.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, for his part, expressed his satisfaction with the growing trend of cooperation between the two countries. [passage omitted]

Kuwait Delegation Seeks Return of 6 Aircraft

LD0903160192 Tehran IRNA in English 1346 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] Tehran, March 9, IRNA—A Kuwaiti delegation is visiting Iran to study the possibility of taking possession of the six Kuwaiti passenger planes flown to Iran during the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of the Persian Gulf emirate.

According to the Foreign Ministry here today the Kuwaiti delegation includes political officials as well as technical experts. Led by Kuwait's ambassador to Tehran, Fawzi 'Abd-al Aziz al-Jasim, the delegation has held its first round of talks with Iranian officials, added the report.

Al-Jasim hailed the stand adopted by the Islamic republic during the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and said Iranian officials had assured Kuwait that the aircraft were being kept as a trust.

He also conveyed the gratitude of the Kuwaiti Government for Iran's cooperation in maintaining the airplanes and for providing refuge to thousands of Kuwaiti nationals who entered Iran during the occupation of their homeland.

Iran has agreed to allow the Kuwaiti delegation to inspect the six aircraft, said the report, adding that documents pertaining to the delivery of the planes would be signed by the two countries after due legal procedure.

The report did not elaborate on the details of the talks or the date of the arrival of the Kuwaiti delegation.

Aid Sent to Burmese Refugees in Bangladesh

LD0903183592 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] Aid dispatched by the Islamic Republic of Iran for the Myanmar [Burmese] Muslim refugees has been delivered to Bangladesh's Red Crescent officials stationed in refugee camps, during the past few days. The aid, dispatched in six trucks from the capital of Bangladesh,

Dhaka, to the border region southeast of that country, comprised a variety of clothes, foodstuff, and hygiene products.

The Islamic Republic of Iran's Red Crescent has also placed a check amounting to one million taka at the disposal of Bangladesh's Red Crescent to assist the Myanmar Muslim refugees.

Omani Foreign Affairs State Minister Visits

Met by Velayati

LD0703205692 Tehran IRNA in English 1804 GMT 7 Mar 92

[Text] Tehran, March 7, IRNA—Omani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah arrived here today at the head of a delegation. Bin-'Alawi was greeted at Mehrabad Airport by Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

Urges Consolidation of Ties

LD0803163792 Tehran IRNA in English 1052 GMT 8 Mar 92

[Text] Tehran, March 8, IRNA—Omani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah discussed Tehran-Muscat relations and regional cooperation with Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati here Sunday.

Bin-'Abdallah, who arrived here Saturday night on a one-day visit, called for consolidation of bilateral ties, increased economic and trade cooperation and telecommunication links.

Bin-'Abdallah who has just returned from a tour to the newly-independent Central Asian republics, also raised Oman's relations with the republics and its interest in upgrading relations with the Persian Gulf littoral states.

Velayati said the forthcoming third session of the joint Iran-Oman economic commission will help further promote Tehran-Muscat cooperation.

Briefing Bin-'Abdallah on Tehran's relations with the newly-independent republics of Central Asia, Velayati also voiced Tehran's readiness to broaden ties with the Persian Gulf littoral states in the fields of telecommunications, trade and economy.

'Positive Step' in Relations Seen

LD0803173892 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 8 Mar 92

[Text] Mr. [Yusuf] Bin-'Alawi, Omani minister of state for foreign affairs, left Tehran today. He was seen off by Foreign Minister Mr. Velayati. The purpose of his trip to Tehran was to submit a message from Sultan Qabus to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. In an interview with our correspondent, he considered this trip as a positive step in the expansion of relations between the two countries.

He added that in his discussions with Mr. Velayati, ways of expanding cooperation between the two countries in all fields of interest to them were studied.

Mr. Velayati too, in an interview with our correspondent, said in connection with Mr. Yusuf Bin-'Alawi: The expansion of economic relations between the two countries and important regional and international issues were discussed during this trip. He added that the topic for discussion at the Iran-Oman third Joint Economic Commission which is due to meet in Muscat in the near future, was also reviewed during Mr. Bin-'Alawi's trip. It was also decided that the two countries' Joint Political Commission should convene in Muscat soon. The foreign minister added: Mr. Bin-'Alawi also called on the Islamic Republic of Iran to endeavor to establish friendly relations between Central Asian Republics and Oman.

Turkey's Upgraded Ties With Israel 'Unjustifiable'

LD0803225192 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 8 Mar 92

[Station commentary]

[Excerpts] According to dispatches ties between Ankara and Tel Aviv were elevated to ambassadorial level only this week and Uri Gordon, the Zionist regime's charge d'affaires in Turkey was promoted to the post of the ambassador. In this way Turkey, which had lowered its diplomatic ties with the Zionist regime to the level of charge d'affaires following the 1980 military coup in Ankara, has now set up full diplomatic relations with the Qods [Jerusalem] occupier regime. This comes at a time when the land of Palestine continues to be under the Zionist regime's occupation and when the Americans too, are endeavoring to create grounds for Israel's recognition by regional states (?towards) attaining their objectives. Therefore, in the opinion of political observers, certain moves by Turkish statesmen on further expansion of relations with Tel Aviv are designed as stabilizing and bolstering its position in the region. As the Israeli officials still believe (?closeness) between the Turkish and Israeli policies in line with the strategy of the West and common interest of both countries underlines the need for the development of such ties. In this regard one can point to some cases in relation to the motive behind the expansion of bilateral relations.

One of the important issues noted in the Ankara-Tel Aviv relations is linked with the (?plan) on hosting a conference on water distribution which is scheduled to be held in Turkey. The Israeli officials have repeatedly sought participation in a project for [word indistinct] the water pipeline linking Turkey and the Arab states of the Middle East. Considering the fact that water crisis in the region is one of the main obstacles in the way of large-scale migration of the Jews to Israel, Tel Aviv is mainly concerned over procurement of the needed drinking water. Hence, the Israeli Government has constantly tried to find ways to steal the water resources of

the neighborly Arab states and to implement its designs in this regard. [passage omitted].

In the economic field, ties between Ankara and Tel Aviv show a considerable volume of commercial exchanges. For instance: In the course of the eight-year rule of the Motherland Party of Turkey, volume of trade between Ankara and Tel Aviv went up by 158 percent. This is besides cooperation in other spheres now being pursued by the two countries. Therefore, in general it can be said that from the viewpoint of the Muslims in the region, the establishment of such economic and diplomatic relations between Ankara and Tel Aviv, and finally the recent step by the Turkish government in elevating the diplomatic ties with Tel Aviv, are unjustifiable. The reason is that (?this certain) issue is naturally in conflict with the ideals of the Palestinians and other Muslims in the region, as it is in line with the interests of the world arrogance, especially America. In fact, today all the Muslims in the region are showing sensitivity towards the policies being adopted by various governments vis-a-vis the Zionists. They know well that any diplomatic, economic, or cultural ties with the racist and Zionist regime will in fact further consolidate that regime in the area. Based on this, the Turkish Government will face a problem in justifying its double policy being maintained with regard to the Islamic states and the Zionist regime.

Nepal & Bhutan

20,000 Bhutan Refugees in Nepal; 200 Arrive Daily

BK0903152292 Hong Kong AFP in English 1515 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] Kathmandu, March 9 (AFP)—Nepalese Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala told parliament Monday that more than 20,000 Bhutanese refugees had arrived in Nepal and more were arriving at the rate of 200 per day, state radio reported.

He said the government was loooking for somewhere to house the refugees, who are of Nepali origin, during the coming monsoon season, but that it was not possible for the government alone to meet all their requirements.

Kathmandu had recently signed an agreement with the World Food Programme for the programme to provide grain for 15,000 refugees for four months, Koirala said, adding the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Children's Fund were also helping.

Meanwhile his government was extending moral support to the refugees for their "fight for human and democratic rights in their motherland," he said.

The Bhutanese National Democratic Party (BNDP), founded in New Delhi earlier this year by a former civil servant in Bhutan's trade ministry, has alleged that Bhutan had forced those of Nepali origin to leave or accept Bhutanese culture.

Most Bhutanese are Buddhists while those of Nepali origin are largely Hindu.

BNDP President R.B. Basnyet alleged at a press conference here Sunday that 50,000 refugees had left southern Bhutan since 1988 when the policy was introduced. Some had gone to the northern Indian states of Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya and West Bengal.

The Bhutan embassy in New Delhi said Monday between 7,000 and 8,000 had left.

Experts on Bhutan said it was difficult to ascertain if all the refugees were really from Bhutan as people from Nepal have regularly been crossing both Bhutan's and India's borders in the area for years.

The trouble in southern Bhutan stems from a 1988 government decision to take a census of its population and to consider as Bhutanese only those people of Nepalese origin who arrived in the country before 1958, they said.

A mission from the London-based human rights group Amnesty International visited Bhutan in January and said some allegations made outside the country of human rights abuses were untrue although some had been substantiated, adding it had asked the government to investigate these.

Government Announces Rupee Partially Convertible

BK0303154692 Hong Kong AFP in English
1432 GMT 3 Mar 92

[Text] KATHMANDU, March 3 (AFP)—The Nepalese Government has announced the partial convertibility of the rupee effective Wednesday [4 March], matching the decision of giant neighbour India to allow its currency to trade freely.

Minister of State for Finance Mahesh Acharya announced the decision to allow the currency to be more freely traded against the U.S. dollar and other foreign currencies during an address to parliament on Tuesday.

India's finance minister said Tuesday his country's rupee will become freely convertible.

To support partial convertibility, which is widely seen as an effort to boost exports and industrial development, Acharya told parliament "the government accordingly decided to purchase 35 percent of the foreign currency from exporters at the official rate and the remaining 65 percent at the prevailing market price."

He told the house, however, that the official exchange rate would remain in place for the importation of industrial machinery, life saving drugs and petroleum and oil production equipment, in an effort to check increases in their price.

The governor of the Nepal Rastra Bank (central bank), Hari Shanker Tripathi, said the exchange rate of the

Nepalese currency would be fixed by five commercial banks in Kathmandu but would reflect supply and demand.

He told AFP [AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE] the partial convertibility measure was "the turning point in the context of the liberalization of the Nepalese national economy".

Businessmen said foreign currency transactions at local banks remained suspended, as they had been for the preceding 24 hours, and apparently would resume only after the new measure comes into effect Wednesday morning. (endall0

Pakistan

Shooting Incident With Indian Troops Denied

BK0903154692 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network
in Urdu 1500 GMT 9 Mar 92

[Text] The ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN, quoting official sources in Islamabad, has said that there has not been any exchange of fire between Pakistani and Indian forces along the Line of Control and the report published in certain sections of the press in this regard is incorrect. The sources described as baseless and fabricated the report that five Pakistani soldiers were martyred during artillery and small arms firing between Pakistani and Indian forces along the Line of Control in the Mandiala sector of Kashmir. The sources added that contrary to Indian claims, no such incident has taken place and the report is totally baseless. The publication of fabricated stories about clashes along the Line of Control from time to time is apparently aimed at boosting the flagging morale of the occupation forces, the sources observed.

'Change' in U.S. Policy Toward India Welcomed

BK1003094992 Lahore THE NATION in English
10 Mar 92 p 6

[Editorial: "Pentagon Policy Paper]

[Text] The so-called pro-India tilt which had begun at the urgings of certain lobbies within the US administration could have hit a snag or two because of security concerns that the US defence policy strategists have been studying. The initial tilt seems to have come about, among other things, by three rather obvious factors. India's size, its democratic credentials and its recognition of Israel. These positive factors obscured three equally strong negative ones—India's unwillingness to give up its nuclear programme, its harbouring of regional hegemonic dreams and its bleak record of human rights violations. In that post-Iraq euphoria of a new world order, even a proposal to make India permanent member of the Security Council, also began to be talked about. That the hard-nosed Pentagon policy-makers arrived at a different assessment of the matters as they stand, is now apparent with the publication in THE NEW YORK

TIMES of a report that underlines the priorities that US security manager ought to keep in mind. One element of that is that any ambitions for building paralled or rival 'superpower' centres in Europe or Asia, need to be curbed. As if to give substance to this somewhat vaguely defined policy line, some thaw in the US relations with Pakistan is visible. Resumption in the supply of spare parts of the military hardware, is one indication of that. The other is the denial by senior US officials of any pro-India tilt.

Even though it is too early to say that US-Pakistan relations are headed toward status quo ante, Pakistan's nuclear programme still being a hurdle, a greater understanding in the Pentagon of Pakistan's security concerns, is obvious. Even on the nuclear issue the US is clearly in favour of the Pakistani proposal of a five-nation conference rather than the Indian claim of equality of treatment with other nuclear powers. This regional balancing act of the US, could not have come a moment too soon. Taking the US backing for granted, India had already stepped up its reign of terror in Kashmir, had more stridently claimed that all Kashmir belonged to India—as if it was a piece of property that a modern day Gulab Singh had purchased for it—and had generally been strutting around as regional bully. It does not mean of course that Pakistan should give up its policy of diversification of sources of military supplies. It only means that there might be some relief in the pressure that the US had unfairly been applying on Pakistan. To that extent this change is welcome.

Editorial Urges Caution Toward U.S. Overtures

BK1003095792 Islamabad THE MUSLIM
in English 10 Mar 92 p 6

[Editorial: "A Change of Heart in U.S.?"

[Text] It appears that the Pentagon (the United States' defense department) has adopted the technique of thinking aloud in its policy framing process. A document, evidently leaked to the US media, and given publicity by the prestigious NEW YORK TIMES, rambles on a wide range of subjects of interest to the United States. There is an ill-concealed warning for aspirants to big power status after the demise of the Soviet colossus. Some of the major US partners in the Nato alliance have actually been named. This part of the document does offer a measure of amusement to us, but what may deserve a passing moment of thought is the broad hint that the US finds a "constructive relationship" with Pakistan as an "important element" in promoting stable security conditions in Southwest Asia and Central Asia.

As is well known, Pak-US relations at the moment are at the very lowest ebb ever. From the ordinary US citizens to US diplomats, on to the US President Bush himself, nobody has missed an opportunity to humiliate and harm this country, its interests and image. This observation has nothing at all to do with US aid and assistance. Nor with the question of wheat or weapons, both of

which Pakistan needs. This country's complaint is simply that as a friend, and old friend at that, the United States has abruptly turned cold and contemptuous towards the "most allied of its allies". Money and material is not everything. In fact, in oriental values, these things just do not matter. What does, is mutual respect and trust. That relationship has been grievously wounded, and by Washington alone.

That being the background to Pak-US relations at the moment, the Pentagon's sudden discovery that relations with this country could be of any value and a reconstruction of these may be called for comes as a surprise. One doesn't need more than a moment's thought to say that the government and political leadership of Pakistan should not go into raptures. They must resist their adolescent tendency to pursue half-baked policies and romantic objectives. At the moment the Pentagon disclosure amounts to little more than a balloon. Watch the direction of the wind. Study its content. Take your time. And Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif owes it to himself not to forget his own gallant rhetoric about self-reliance, about life after cessation of US aid crumbs.

If there is any logic in Washington having such loud second thoughts about Pakistan then, most probably, the real consideration is the US interest in having a habitation and a name in the 'New World' opening up in the heart of Asia, most of which is predominantly Muslim. With a stable foothold in this region, the United States can have a grandstand seat, watching the whole of Central Asia. And why only watching? The US outposts in Central Asian capitals would put it on the borders with the Russian Federation as well as People's China. It is in this context that a "constructive US-Pakistan relationship" would of course be a splendid idea. But from the viewpoint of Washington, not necessarily from the Islamabad angle. Pakistan has learned the hard way what it costs to be the cat's paw for United States. The people of Pakistan have the profoundest affection for the people in Central Asia, as well as for China. There is every reason for us to have greatly improved equation with

new Moscow. What kind of purpose the US would want to seek in Central Asia is still too obscure to feel reassured about. What is absolutely clear at this moment is that our perception of relations with Central Asia, and what might Washington's be, are unlikely to be congruent hence caution is the best policy at the moment. Say 'no' to any invitation to a cruise between the devil and the deep sea.

Defense Minister Meets With Saudi Counterpart

*BK0903155892 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network
in Urdu 1500 GMT 9 Mar 92*

[Text] Federal Defense Minister Syed Ghaus Ali Shah, who was on a week-long visit to Saudi Arabia as a special emissary of Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, has held detailed talks with Saudi Defense Minister Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz and Deputy Defense Minister Prince 'Abd-al-Rahman Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz. Syed Ghaus Ali Shah said their talks, which were held in a cordial atmosphere, were successful and meaningful. He expressed the hope that such meetings will further strengthen relations between two fraternal countries and will help explore the possibilities of bilateral cooperation in various fields. The federal minister has now left for Oman for a two-day visit.

Iran To Assist Ailing Industries

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in English 1415 GMT 9 Mar 92*

[Text] Iran will provide 350 million rupees for the recommissioning of sick [loss-incurring] industrial units. This was stated by the federal minister for production, Mr. Islam Nabi, while talking to APP in Islamabad. He said Iran will not only provide assistance for two textile units in Balochistan but will also help to explore other areas for mutual cooperation, including food processing. He said a company named Iran-Pak Industries has been formed for this purpose. The equity of Pakistan is 51 percent while Iran has 49 percent share.